

Support of HB2352

Chairman Witt and Committee Members,

As river users have been vocal about damage and the inability to co-recreate with and navigate large wakes, and public and private property has incurred damage as a result of these wakes, the Legislative Working Group tasked members Matt Radich of Active Water Sports, the local boating representative, and Steve Gregg, the representative of the Oregon River and Safety Preservation Alliance President, to come together and reach a compromise.

Matt Radich and Steve Gregg worked together diligently and were able to come together, compromise and propose this legislation.

The Big Boat community has stated the solution is education. This bill provides that educational piece.

HB2352 provides the necessary funds, and empowers the Marine Board, to create educational programs to ensure that all participating in towed watersports are trained to navigate large wakes, able to navigate crowded waterways safely, and are ultimately aware of the potential significant impact of their wakes. Upon training, the users will be issued an endorsement on their boating license.

HB2352 does not target specific users. I myself, own a 2000 pound waterski boat, as opposed to newer boats weighing up to 12,000 pounds, and am happy to pay and participate in the educational program.

As one would need an endorsement to drive a semi-truck/trailer on the highway, HB2352 gives the Marine Board the ability to issue towed watersports endorsements, to not only ensure users are properly trained to maneuver massive boats and their wakes, but ensure that all participating in towed sports are properly trained to protect other users (paddlers, swimmers, kayakers, canoers, fishermen), trained to protect the integrity of the river, protect public property, and protect personal property.

As this bill applies narrowly to a particular class, the endorsement will not only address the safety of all river users, but allow the Marine Board to gather valuable data on the type of boats which are using this small, vulnerable stretch of the waterway.

HB2352 creates funding for a program that the Oregon State Marine Board states they can administer.

The Sherriff was consulted to ensure the laws can be enforced and the fines appropriate to encourage the compliance to operate with a certificate and endorsement.

The fiscal impact is minimal, as there will be revenue income to offset some costs. This is not a new tax for the general fund. The revenue generated from endorsement fees and fines are intended to create and support this program and support law enforcement's ability to enforce the rules.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

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