

SB 857 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Rules

Prepared By: Leslie Porter, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 6/1

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Provides that maximum loading weight of motorboat must be less than 4,000 pounds to obtain towed watersports motorboat certificate (TWMC) . Authorizes State Marine Board to conduct study related to increasing prescribed maximum loading weight and prescribes guidance for study. Requires TWMC decal be displayed in certain area and in accordance with State Marine Board rules. Provides that person shall carry towed watersports endorsement if engaged in any towed watersports within Newberg Pool Congested Zone. Applicable to TWMCs issued, renewed, or replaced on or after effective date. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Expands the Newberg Pool Congested Zone from "the portion of the Willamette River beginning at river mile 30 and ending at river mile 50" to "the portion of the Willamette River beginning at Willamette Falls, river mile 26.6 and ending at the mouth of the Yamhill River, river mile 55." Specifies that the definition of "towed watersports" is the meaning given by the State Marine Board, but does not include wake surfing. Defines "wake surfing" as "the activity of propelling an individual forward on equipment like a surfboard, using a boat's wake wherein the person may be holding a rope or free riding." Adds the equipment used in wake surfing to include, but not be limited to, wake surf boards, wake boards, stand up paddleboards, and hydrofoils. Prohibits a person from using devices or individuals to increase wakes or engaging in wake surfing within the Newberg Pool Congested Zone.

BACKGROUND:

The Willamette River Greenway was first proposed in 1967 by Oregon Governor Tom McCall to enhance the scenic, recreational, historic, natural, and agricultural qualities along the Willamette River. In 2019, the Oregon legislature authorized Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) to adopt special regulations to manage boat wake energy within the Willamette River Greenway. In addition, the towed watersports safety education program was created in OSMB that required motorboat operators to hold a towed watersports endorsement and motorboat owners to hold a certificate decal when engaged in towed watersports in specified congested waters

Senate Bill 857 establishes the maximum loading weight of a motorboat as less than 4,000 pounds to obtain a towed watersports motorboat certificate and requires a person to carry a towed watersport endorsement if engaged in any towed watersports. It also authorizes the OSMB to conduct a study on increasing the maximum loading weight and requires that the study make determinations and recommendations to interim committees of the Legislative Assembly based on objective, peer reviewed scientific research and after consultation with the Oregon Department of State Lands, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Department of Environmental Quality.