

SB 857 A -A11 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Rules

Prepared By: Melissa Leoni, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 6/24

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Provides that maximum loading weight of motorboat must be less than 5,000 pounds to obtain towed watersports motorboat certificate. Expands Newberg Pool Congested Zone. Requires certificate decal to be affixed to forward portion of motorboat, visible above waterline, and in accordance with Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) rules. Provides that person shall carry towed watersports endorsement if engaged in any towed watersports within Newberg Pool Congested Zone. Specifies that "towed watersports" has meaning given by OSMB, but does not include wake surfing. Defines "wake surfing" as "the activity of propelling an individual forward on equipment similar to a surfboard, using a boat's wake" where person may be holding a rope or free riding and uses equipment including wake surf boards, wake boards, stand up paddleboards, and hydrofoils. Prohibits person from using devices or individuals to increase wakes or engaging in wake surfing within Newberg Pool Congested Zone. Authorizes OSMB to conduct study related to increasing or decreasing prescribed maximum loading weight and prescribes guidance for study. Applies to certificates issued, renewed, or replaced on or after effective date. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

Senate Vote: Ayes, 22; Nays, 6--Boquist, Heard, Linthicum, Robinson, Thatcher, Thomsen

FISCAL: Fiscal impact issued

REVENUE: No revenue impact

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-A11 Increases maximum loading weight of motorboat from 5,000 pounds to 5,500 pounds. Restores beginning river mile in definition of Newberg Pool Congested Zone to river mile 26.6. Requires OSMB to conduct a study on increasing or decreasing the maximum loading weight and report to Legislative Assembly by January 31, 2022. Sunsets report requirement on July 1, 2022.

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 Legislative Assembly authorized the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) to adopt special regulations to manage boat wake energy within the Willamette River Greenway. The towed watersports safety education program was also created in OSMB to require 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 A establishes the maximum loading weight of a motorboat as less than 5,000 pounds to obtain a towed watersports motorboat certificate and requires a person to carry a towed watersport endorsement if engaged in any towed watersports within Newberg Pool Congested Zone. It authorizes OSMB to conduct a study on increasing or decreasing 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.