

My name is Austin Walker and I would like to testify in opposition of HB 2555 and HB 2725. I have grown up boating on the upper Willamette, with my fondest memories being those with my family and friends on the water. Three years ago I bought a home on the Upper Willamette near Hebb park for the sole purpose of spending our summer months on the water. My wife, myself and our son spend virtually every afternoon in the summer on the Upper Willamette. Our family and friends with their children all participate in towed watersports with us as well.

Each of my neighbors on Riverlane and Riverbend have boats and we all enjoy towed watersports. For the past three years we have complied with all changing boating regulations, including the towed watersports rules put into law last year. Our boat is registered, we obey the rules and are respectful of the waterway. The use of my boat, along with many other neighbors boats will be restricted by passing this house bill. The proposed HB 2725 will strip our ability to enjoy our time on the water with our boat, in our backyard and subsequently damage our property value. The sole reason we purchased our home was to utilize the Upper Willamette throughout the summer and I can provide the names and contact information for each of my neighbors that will testify the same.

I believe the best path forward is continuing with the towed watersports endorsement program and education for boaters. Although I was not in favor of the towed watersports program at first, I value the safety and education it has provided as I enjoy the river with my family.

I strongly urge you to vote in opposition of the two proposed house bills (HB 2555 and HB 2725) as it will restrict my access and my fellow boaters access to the Upper Willamette. Currently as it sits today, everyone has access to the river in a safe manner and by passing these two house bills you will be regulating one specific group of river users, myself and my family included.

Please feel free to contact me at anytime. Austin Walker - 503-516-1919 or by email at [austin@aicloans.com](mailto:austin@aicloans.com).