

I am taking the time to write to you today with strong opposition and even sadness that these bills are being considered.

I lived on the Willamette River (in the Newberg Pool ) for about 6 years, and have kept a boat on the river either at the public marina/boat ramp in Wilsonville or at a private dock for 20+ years and have been a boater on this section of the river for 30+ years.

My wife and I owned a property a-crossed the river from Champoeg State Park and experienced one of the largest landslides on the Newberg Pool section of the river in recent history. We had geologists study and design a repair of this slide. The conclusion was that the landslide was caused by the type of soil on that section of river bank along with an underground stream draining the water from the hillsides to the north. Combining that with high water levels that saturated the soil on the steep bank and then receded very quickly leaving a bank heavy and saturated on a vertical slope that collapsed into the river. The geologist pointed out several ancient bank collapses along the river that look identical to the one we experienced. Power boats did not exist when these other slides happened and no mater how devastating this was for us we cannot blame this on boat wakes! These are natural events that have been shaping the banks of the river for thousands of years!

Pushing these new laws is in fact a small, but vocal, group that targets boats as damaging their docks, and creating erosion, all with no studies or hard evidence. I have personal experience that this is not the case. Erosion happens and has been happening for thousands of years to these riverbanks! A consideration is that the other group involved does not want to maintain their docks and river banks. A dock is a structure that needs maintenance. Just like any other structure, if you do not maintain it, it will fall apart. Another consideration is the damage from the massive amount of debris that comes with high river levels. Water levels are also a contributing factor. This year alone the river raised and fell 20-25 feet.

We no longer own a property on the river but still boat in the Newberg pool and planned to purchase again; however, until I feel that these laws have been rejected permanently there is no way I would purchase a riverfront property! If recreational boating is not allowed on the river there is no a reason for us to move back. I am not alone on this and have to assume the value of these waterfront homes will plummet! I lived on the river because I could boat out my back door.

As a watersport community, we have tried for years to work with this small but vocal group of people. We have followed all the rules such as: (1) Using the surf zones created by the Oregon State Marine Board, (2) obtaining the required "Towed Sport Certification" through additional education and fees and (3) securing the Towed Sports Certificate targeting only wake boarding and wake surfing, not ALL tow sports like water skiing and tubing. This group even went after suggesting a directional option that would keep people from passing back and forth in front of someone's home as part of their relentless and ever-encompassing effort. I have found this group pushing toward their agenda all the while not willing to compromise, whereas, our boating community has made all the concessions and sacrifices. When will this end?

I ask you to take a long look at these rules that are trying to be enforced without any evidence, and reject them outright.

Law Enforcement should not and cannot be focused on this. They do not have the time or resources. They should be focusing on enforcing the existing laws and for safety.

Let this waterway be one that all can enjoy and not allow access to its use to be lessened by a vocal and powerful few.

I hope you can appreciate the fact that I think these bills are not fair and not equitable.