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Oregon State Legislature:

**I'm writing to oppose HB 2725:** Provides that maximum loading weight of motorboat must be less than 4,000 pounds to obtain towed watersports motorboat certificate.

My days on the water started at a young age, from an infant and now with having kids of my own. I have grown up appreciating the family memories it has created. Growing up we spent almost every weekend on the water with friends and family. This was something I looked forward to once school was out for summer. It was a time to get away from the hustle and bustle of sports schedules, homework, jobs, and just be part of the outdoors. These days it's even more important that we step away from electronics, from the demands of our jobs, and spend quality time with our family. When it's even harder to get your kids away from computers and your spouse off conference calls it's a blessing we have our water ways to escape to. We own fishing kayaks that my husband enjoys fishing our rivers and lakes on, almost every weekend year-round! I have a stand-up paddle board that I get to enjoy with co-workers as we meet almost weekly on the water to destress aka water therapy. We have had a camper for the past 6 years that we visit our state parks and water ways with our kids, getting them to explore their outdoors. Our state has blessed us with places to visit and explore at times when we need it most.

I'm an ICU nurse and a year ago changed everything for me personally as the stress of my job hit an unbelievable high but it also changed for our family. We had all these family trips planned and learned quickly that we must find joy in our own backyard, here in Oregon. For years I've tried to convince my husband we should have our own boat as we had relied on friends and our yearly trip to my parent's lake house in Missouri for water time. Last year that changed as we ordered our 1<sup>st</sup> boat and decided to focus on staycations. This is not only for the safety of our family but for others and regardless of your opinions on COVID, being outdoors is a great socially distanced activity that EVERYONE can participate in.

Sadly, we are realizing how little people in this state value this time on water for families with these proposed bills. There is this idea that towed water sports and paddlers, kayaks, and other users of our water ways can't get along or compromise. Why is it more important that one particular group get to enjoy our water ways more than the other? There is some bias here that I don't understand and while there is an argument of safety or science, none of this has been proven to be the issue. In fact, you are creating safety issues. By limiting where your boats are, you are forcing them into other areas of the river and even state. This is going to create an overcrowding at other areas of the river or other local lakes. I would like to think people can share and be respectful of one another, but what this seems like to me is a group of people wanting the water to themselves. We should be showing the next

generations how to appreciate the water ways, how to respect others on the water, and how to work together to better solutions. Not everyone in a boat is out there to wake surf, which seems to be the target boating group. I grew up water skiing and barefooting. My boys (14 and 12) both have learned to water ski as well. My husband did not grow up on water but learned to wake surf and loved it so we have a healthy mix of different activities we safely participate in. In this bill, our new boat would not be allowed, which is so disappointing to be told that our family activities are less important than those that paddle or row for instance. There is already a lot of restrictions on the waterways in Oregon and this is the straw that breaks everything in my opinion. You are creating an environment catered to one group, not to that of families and others that would like to share the water. Lastly, what about all of the businesses that support the river? Are your group of individuals wanting the water going to bring in that much income to these businesses that are impacted or the state? Watersports provides a lot of businesses with income – from marinas to the restaurants we visit when on the river, to the dealers we get our boats from to the mechanics that work on them.

I did not grow up in Oregon originally (have lived here now for 14 years) and my family/friends out of state cannot even believe this is an issue brought up. I was shocked myself and knew I needed to write you to voice my concern and opposition to this bill. I'm all for protecting our environment for future generations to enjoy and keeping our water ways safe. I think we all can be better examples on how to SHARE our waterways.

Sincerely,  
Heather Pfrehm & the Pfrehm Family