

Good afternoon Reprehensive Witt and fellow committee members, My name is Craig Richards of Wilsonville OR. I am here to testify in opposition to House Bill 2555 and House Bill 2725.

My opposition to this bill comes from the three main ways I use the Willamette River

I am the tiller on a Dragon boat that competes most years in the rose festival. While in command of this boat and its 20 paddlers, I have no issues with the wake from the boats that are proposed to be banned with this bill. The wake from these ballasted boats do not pose a safety risk to myself or paddlers on the boat. I understand how to safely navigate my boat in all water conditions.

I am also an avid fisherman where most summers I spend my Saturday and Sunday fishing this stretch of the Newberg pool in my small fishing boat. I have no issue with the wake from the boats that are proposed to be banned.

I also enjoy towed watersports, this bill would remove my ability to recreate on this portion of the river. While engaged in towed sports we keep our distance from docks and other boaters. We always put safety over the sport and ensure that is the case for all boaters on the river.

These bills are not based on science; there is no evidence that links the erosion on the riverbanks or dock damage solely to the boats proposed to be banned in this bill. This bill would eliminate a family friendly and socially distant activity at time that it is needed most.

I do not understand why the chair of this committee allowed testimony from a person who admitted that what they did to the river banks was an illegal while gathering evidence for these bills. (Pinning of the shoreline) This shows the character of the person testifying that they believe they are above the law and the rules we must all follow.

What concerns me most about these bills, it looks to be pushed by those that just want the river to themselves and want to deny others access to the river. These small groups are unwilling and unable to share the river that is there for everyone to responsibly use.

Thank you for your time

Craig Richards

