

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing this letter to you and asking for your support in opposing HB 2725 and HB 2555. My wife and I have raised our three kids on the lower Willamette River and have learned that our time together boating on the river is the best family time that we have. In a day of technology and constant movement, it has become the one place that we can all be together and share a common interest. As our kids have gotten older, our water sports have changed. The kids loved to tube when they were younger. They soon progressed into wake boarding and water skiing, and finally landed on wake surfing. It has been the go-to water sport for everyone in our family for the past ten years. This is why I am asking for you to oppose further restrictions on the sport. Please don't take this family activity away from us and other families that share the river. Since the first day we put our boat in the water, we have learned to share the water with everyone. We know that fishermen are using the water in the late spring and early summer, so we limit our wake. We also know that the river is very busy on the weekends and we therefore choose to surf at other times. If we don't want to be around jet skiers, we minimize our time around Meldrum Bar Park. We have all learned to share the river without trying to take it away from a certain group. I feel that there are already rules in place that need to be enforced without having to impose sweeping bans. In a time when there is very limited options for families to do sports together, this is an unfair and very biased change. We preach equity and inclusion to our kids all day long, and yet these House Bills are doing the exact opposite. I feel that wake surfers are being unfairly targeted and singled out. My 17 year old daughter asked me a couple weeks ago what we were going to do if we can't surf, and I didn't have an answer for her. Please help me protect our way of life and that of so many other families that bond together on the river. This is a family activity and it deserves to carry on. Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Best regards,
Ryan McDonald