

Chair Witt, members of the committee, my name is Joel Sprague, and I'm here to testify in opposition to HB2734, HB 2555 and HB 2725. Like so many others you have heard from my wife and I along with our 4 young children love to use the Newberg pool for towed water sports, we have a boat that ways 6000lbs and will no longer able to do what we enjoy if you do not reject these bills.

I want to speak respectfully to the point that senator Kennemer made about the Willamette over the last 25 years of memories I have on the river. Unlike his experience walking though the shallows for the first time with my dad 25 years ago I don't recall the habitats he does. I remember getting stuck in that silt that in his words was "mucky and yucky". I too grew up near the river and just up river from senator Kennemers home and my experience was far different then his.

I have reviewed the research from OSU titled "Potential Damages of Wake Boats on the Willamette River Margins." I don't see is science to prove that the wake boats have made a change to this stretch of river. I am a contractor and have repaired erosion problems on this stretch of river, these problems come from flooding as pictured below and water runoff from housing developments eroding banks. During the summer months when we are on the river we look up high in the banks 20 feet above us and see trees roots exposed from the rushing currents from the high winter water levels.

To say that the wake boats are to blame for the erosion and damage to the river is gross overstatement, the question is do the wakes even make a difference in the big picture.

I have also included some pictures from the pudding river that feeds into the Molalla and then into the Willamette. This river is too small for wake boats and would be an excellent sample to study. My hypothesis is that the study would show that the pudding has equal erosion issues to the Willamette without the presents of wake boats concluding that the wake boats are not the problem on the Willamette.

I am opposed to the HB 2734, 2555, and 2725, the science doesn't back it up. Like so many others my family and I love to spend our time in the summer enjoying the river and we do love wake sports. I believe the wake community would love to come together and work on plans to keep from overcrowding and maximizing safety on the river we love so much. Please join us in opposing this bill and help us save our sport at the same time saving the river we love so much!

I know you have heard much testimony but I sincerely request a response back.

Respectfully,

Joel Sprague

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Boones Ferry Marina during spring high water 2019-Below



Boones Ferry Marina with typical winter water levels (still high above summer levels)-Below



Boones Ferry Marina during spring high water 2019-Below



Boones Ferry Marina with typical winter water levels (still high above summer levels)-Below



Pudding River (tributary of the Willamette with no wakeboat access to study)

These are winter time avg. water levels on the pudding

