

Chair Witt, members of the committee, my name is Megan Fisher and I'm here to testify in opposition to 2555 and 2725.

Just about four years ago we moved our family to our riverfront home here in West Linn. We were captivated by the area and having the ability to raise our children on the river with access to swimming, paddling and boating. The last few summers have brought everyone so much joy as we have explored the various areas on the river by paddle board, found "secret" swimming holes and built their confidence and independence through tubing and surfing for the first time behind the boat.

Last year with COVID, it seemed everyone found our little piece of the river. More people than ever went out and purchased boats as a way to enjoy the area with their families in a safe and socially distant way. We've never seen it so busy and happy to see others finding the same joy we do with the Willamette.

Unfortunately, at the same time we saw regulations beginning to ban boating sports in particular areas of the river. This caused a dangerous environment of boating congestion in a few areas paired with a high influx of people on the river who had little to no education on water and boating safety.

Water sports have been a part of the DNA of this community for years, even the Portland Water Spectacular dates back to 1986. The proposed legislation seems to be focused on exclusion and misses the key points that will allow for everyone to enjoy the river together as a community. The focus needs to be on greater education and enforcement for all water recreational sports, not taking things away and creating a larger divide.

I appreciate your time and consideration,

Megan Fisher