

I support HB 2725 and ask the legislature to pass it.

I live along the upper Willamette River in Newberg and have recreated here for many years. I painfully observe my property being damaged every day during the summer as these large wakes cut into the foot of my banks and take away many feet of soft soil, weakening the stability of my bank. I see the muddy water during the summer that is caused directly by this erosion. I suffered a failure in my bank caused by this activity and I can see other parts of my bank that are now at risk because the wakes have eaten away the foot of the bank and it is only a matter of time before they fall in as well.

I hear the owners of these large and VERY expensive wakeboats accuse me of being a selfish and wealthy landowner that is trying to turn the Willamette River into my private waterway. I hear them state that the science showing the damage is biased and paid for by wealthy landowners. I hear them state that their wakes cause no damage and that the rise of the river is what causes all of the damage. I hear them say that we have no right to prevent them from using their big expensive boats in this part of the river--that it is their undeniable right. I hear them say that we are going to eliminate boating in the upper Willamette River and that there are not other options for them.

None of these arguments are fact based, nor are they particularly intelligent. The proponents of this bill have provided data that clearly shows the impact of the large wakeboats and have been respectfully attempting to find reasonable balance in order to protect the river and its ecology, prevent property damage and provide more safety for other users. This bill is designed to be reasonable and balanced and based on data and it achieves this. Although large wake boat owners will have a slight inconvenience of needing to take their boats to another location (fairly small price) the benefit to the long-term health of the river AND the reduction in real financial and property damage caused to public and private property AND enhanced safety make this bill very reasonable. Please vote YES. Thank you.