

Representative Witt and members of the committee,

My name is Matt Radich, I am the president of Active Water Sports, an Oregon small business. Our livelihood is centered on the sale and servicing of recreational towboats.

As a group that participates regularly in Marine Board proceedings, we are supportive of transparency and fair representation on the Board. As a public body, the Board has to be an entity that represents all water users.

However, it is unclear if prescribing Board positions in this manner will ensure that the discourse will be fair and equitable to the groups most affected by Board's decisions. The most highly contentious and impactful changes made by the agency over the last year have been regarding recreational boating, and while it's certainly important to have feedback from a variety of groups, HB 2695 gives an outside voice to those not in the boating community to potentially create even more rules to restrict access to the water.

Additionally, the required Board positions state that the member must represent a type of organization "or who has substantial and current experience" with that type of activity. There is no definition for what is considered substantial experience, and this leaves the door open to potentially appoint someone who does not adequately represent that certain community or its views.

Finally, requiring non-voting members from other State agencies focused on natural resource policy is not necessary to the process. The Marine Board currently has the authority to consult with other State agencies when considering matters before the Board, and they regularly include these agencies in such proceedings already. We fear that the outcome of mandating these positions would be to further dilute the voices of the boating community in Board decisions.

The mission of the Oregon State Marine Board is to "serve Oregon's recreational boating public through education, enforcement, access, and environmental stewardship for a safe and enjoyable experience." HB 2695 would add one more layer to the series of decisions made by the Marine Board that have directly run counter to the Board's mission of ensuring access to the water.

We are fully supportive of engaging in further discussion about the best way to guarantee transparency and fair representation on the Oregon State Marine Board. However, HB 2695 is not the answer.

Respectfully,

Matt Radich