

Dear Senator,

Re: SB 857

I've worked in the natural resources sector as a farmer and crop consultant for my entire career. Environmental stewardship, safety and science have been paramount with regard to management practices employed on soil and waterways. I've seen increasing proposed state and national regulation driven by segmented parties with idealistic objectives that fulfill the needs of special interest groups but ignore or discount basic science and pragmatic common sense.

Over the last few years, I've seen several restrictive rules and licensing governing boat use within the lower Willamette river. These rules were implemented under the pretense of improving boater safety practices and protecting the environmental fate of the river. Although the rules require some diligent observation and changes in activity, they were manageable as a boat operator.

In my view SB 857 goes too far in regulating boats and operator/owners by limiting the type of boat that a citizen can choose to enjoy. After reading the house bill the below thoughts came to mind:

- There is a concerted effort by a special interest group to extricate a type of boat and operator from parts of the lower Willamette river. This isn't right! The river is for the public.
- The recent Towed Water Sports license requirement did nothing to improve boater safety. What it did is to serve as a way of identifying and singling out types of boats by requiring the documentation and databasing of boat configuration. This information was most likely used to craft the framework of the bill.
- The bill also states that it may conduct a scientific based on peer reviewed research to identify if increasing allowable boat weight would correlate with any adverse effects to riverbanks, aquatic life and turbidity. Applying a rule then conducting the study is absurd. If you have a research protocol to evaluate such effects, then the research should be conducted before any action is proposed. Putting science secondary in the process is poor policy protocol and only serves to placate the citizens who oppose the new rule. Conduct the scientific research first. Then make a sound decision based on science.
- This identical bill failed to move forward this session in committee as HB 2555/

My family has enjoyed towed water sports (skiing, wakeboarding, surfing and tubing) on Willamette river for over 40 years. I hope not to see these special times be limited to a restricted group of boaters or idealist who employ bad science and public policy making.

Sincerely,

Jeff & Lisa Freeman

Wilsonville Residents, Voters, Taxpayers & Boaters