

I am submitting testimony to oppose SB 857. This legislation is born out of special interest agendas and is not representative of the community at large. Sen. Bill Kenemer has his riverfront home top of mind and has no concern for Oregonians as a whole in this bill.

I have boated on the Willamette for years. I am a proponent of safe boating for the public and encourage the state to continue to look for ways to encourage safe boating. The options that have previously been adopted make this section of the river some of the most controlled, provide additional tax income, and mandate an additional safety course to ensure boating meets standards. I am out on the Willamette every week and this legislation would be a huge negative impact to myself and my family.

Our waterway policies should be grounded in solid research and favor the general public, not select waterfront homeowners and paddlers looking to eliminate motorized boating for their own personal gain, like Sen. Bill Kenemer. Sen. Kenemer suggests that he is bringing this forward based on science but the scientist he has called forward are biased and have not run true studies. His interest in his expensive waterfront home in Canby is very clearly the driver. The three biggest causes of human-caused erosion are the clearing of natural vegetation, mismanagement of existing trees and plants, and improper draining of property. Naturally, much of the erosion occurs from rapid fluctuations of water levels. When water recedes too fast, the weight of the saturated riverbank soil is unsupported, which is why it is essential to maintain the native vegetation. Real studies should be conducted to determine the best ways to keep the river safe and healthy. Furthermore, the Newberg Pool is already one of the most regulated bodies of water in Oregon, and wake surfing is only allowed in two small zones with no adjacent homes.

This bill will make our waterways less safe and negatively impact Oregon families and small businesses. The House already extensively debated this bill and did not move forward. I respectfully urge you to do the same. Oregon needs our senators focused on COVID, economic recovery and getting our kids back in school. Please do not waste time on this unnecessary legislation that Sen. Bill Kenemer is sponsoring for his own personal gain. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Maxwell