

I strongly oppose Senate Bill 857-7 and frankly, I am exceptionally disappointed to see such biased and unsupported amendments proposed, especially considering what real issues our government should be focused on today.

SB 857-7 is a perfect example of what our government should NOT be focused on in the current political climate

COVID 19, racial inequality, civil unrest, rampant unemployment, expiring eviction moratoriums, and homelessness are the issues that our government should be focused on currently. To see Oregon's legislature instead focused on a boat ban to appease a vocal minority is alarming, disappointing, and an outright misrepresentation of what this state needs right now. Instead, this rings of a bias based grab and further government overreach while the public's attention is drawn elsewhere.

SB 857-7 is not scientifically supported

SB 857-7 states that the maximum allowable weight of boats within the Newberg Pool could be increased to above 5000 lbs provided extensive peer reviewed scientific research is conducted and pending consultation and comments from the Department of State Lands, the State Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Environmental Quality. Where is the peer reviewed scientific research and input from these government agencies that actually support the current proposed amendments? They do not exist. Where is the peer reviewed study that the boats that would be banned by Senate Bill 857-7 create erosion and property damage beyond what is caused by the annual fluctuation of water levels and annual flooding? They do not exist. The 5000 lb weight limit specified in SB 857-7 is not based on scientific research or the recommendation of any of the above listed government agencies. It was selected by the vocal minority to ban the majority of boats using the Newberg Pool without any scientific support. The amendments currently proposed by SB 857-7 would be most accurately summarized as "guilty until proven innocent on the basis of conjecture". Without peer reviewed scientific data to support the proposed amendments, SB 857-7 is grossly negligent at best. Passing scientifically unsupported Senate Bills does not align with the integrity expected of Oregon State Legislature.

Senate Bill 857-7 is exceptionally biased

If you go to any boat ramp within the Newberg Pool you will see that the majority of the boats, by definition within SB 857-7, have a maximum loading weight of 5,000 lbs or more and would therefore be banned by SB 857-7. SB 857-7 supports the voice of a vocal minority and it does not represent the majority of those that use the river. Previous petitions of riverfront homeowners along the Newberg Pool show the overwhelming majority in fact support the use of the river by boaters that would be banned by SB 857-7. The biased limitations included in SB 857-7 target specific river user groups and turn a public water way into an exclusive water way, without scientific support, all to appease a vocal minority.

The existing laws and regulations within the Newberg Pool and the Willamette River are already out of control and unenforced

I have been boating the Newberg Pool for almost four decades now. For the vast majority of those four decades there was little to no regulation as to who could and could not use the river. Now, all within the past few years, that regulation has ballooned to a proportion that I could not have previously imagined, and yet somehow all of that regulation has only targeted very specific river users. Now this aggressive and unprecedented overregulation aims to ban the majority of the river users. A boat ban of this nature is unprecedented and frankly egregious. Earlier this year the Oregon State Marine Board enacted even more boating restriction on the Lower Willamette, and again those regulations were targeted at specific river users. To what end? A total boat ban on the Willamette?

Please do not support SB 857-7