

SB 1589 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

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Meeting Dates: 2/9, 2/14

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Prohibits person from using devices or individuals to increase wakes or engaging in wake surfing within Newberg Pool Congested Zone. Provides that maximum loading weight of motorboat must be less than 5,000 pounds to obtain towed watersports motorboat certificate (Certificate) and requires Certificate decal to be displayed in certain area and in accordance with Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) rules. Expands Newberg Pool Congested Zone. Provides that person shall carry towed watersports endorsement if engaged in any towed watersports within Newberg Pool Congested Zone. Specifies that definition of "towed watersports" is meaning given by OSMB by rule, but does not include wake surfing. Defines "wake surfing" as "the activity of propelling an individual forward on equipment like a surfboard, using a boat's wake wherein the person may be holding a rope or free riding." Adds equipment used in wake surfing to include wake surf boards, wake boards, stand up paddleboards, and hydrofoils. Authorizes OSMB to conduct study related to increasing or decreasing prescribed maximum loading weight and prescribes guidance for study. Applies to Certificates issued, renewed, or replaced on or after effective date. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Willamette River Greenway was first proposed in 1967 by Oregon Governor Tom McCall to enhance the scenic, recreational, historic, natural, and agricultural qualities along the Willamette River. In 2019, the Oregon legislature authorized the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) to adopt special regulations to manage boat wake energy within the Willamette River Greenway. In addition, the towed watersports safety education program was created in OSMB that required motorboat operators to hold a towed watersports endorsement and motorboat owners to hold a certificate decal when engaged in towed watersports in specified congested waters.

Senate Bill 1589 establishes the maximum loading weight of a motorboat as less than 5,000 pounds to obtain a towed watersports motorboat certificate. The Act prohibits a person from using a devices or individuals to increase wakes or engaging in wake surfing within Newberg Pool Congested Zone.