

Submitter: Jeff Douglass  
On Behalf Of: My family and community  
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment  
Measure: SB1589

Thank you for taking the time to consider my remarks. The Newberg pool of the Willamette river has been a favorite site of summer recreation for myself, my family, and many members of my community. We have used this river with youth organizations bringing many middle school and high school students to enjoy healthy fun activities in the summer. There is no easily accessible alternative option in our community.

Before us now is another proposed restriction on public use without the support of any specific data. Although I am uncertain of the origin of this bill, the text of the legislation and proposed restrictions arbitrarily restrict the use of this body of water based the weight of an individual's boat and factory ballast capacity. What evidence supports this? The legislation outlines possible study to look at the issue - why would a restriction be placed and then we would consider collecting data? I am very skeptical that the data would support this restriction. The winter storms, increased water flow and winter debris are much more likely to have a significant effect on river bed erosion than summertime recreation.

The legislation will have a large impact on people who love and use this natural resource. The average weight of boats registered or certified by the towed water sports education program is an excess of 5000 pounds. I feel like my boat is an excellent example of this. My boat has a dry weight from the manufacturer of 3900 pounds however the legislation is clear that the weight must include the factory ballast capacity which in my boat is 1250 pounds. To be clear that ballast is water weight can be added or subtracted during use. This seems poorly written. Based on the requirements in this legislation my boat would total 5150 pounds and therefore not be eligible to be used. Why would a boat be excluded based on ballast maximum load which can be left unused? Without data we have no way of knowing if a 3000 pound boat or a 5000 pound boat or a 10,000 pound boat run at different speeds for different uses would make a different environmental impact.

Lastly, I was troubled by the terminology at the end of the bill declaring this an emergency. I believe that this is setting up a state of urgency to push legislation forward without supporting data to restrict access. I would have a very different feeling about this if there was high quality data to support this legislation. Declaring this an emergency to motivate people to move forward without taking the time to consider if the steps that are proposed are going to achieve the desired outcome. I believe there's a responsibility to choose wisely restrictions that will dramatically impact peoples ability to interact with our wonderful natural resources. We should make these decisions not on whim or perception of a few when the decision affects a large number of individuals.

Thanks for your time and consideration.  
Jeff Douglass