

Dear Committee Members:

SB 1589 would keep producers of the largest wakes- those from wake surfing- from causing extensive environmental damage in the Newberg Pool. Surfing and larger boats undergoing towed watersports generate powerful wakes that cause erosion of the riverbanks, soil loss and water turbidity. The Willamette River is a resource that belongs to all Oregonians. Wake surfing is not appropriate in this section of the river where the river is too narrow to allow significant dispersion of surf wake energy. Scientific studies support this. The steep soft banks are too vulnerable to the energy of large wakes.

These wakes are also hazardous to other boaters and recreational users. They impact the enjoyment of the river by the majority of other river users.

Wake surfing can take place many other places in Oregon, including the lower Willamette River, Columbia River and various lakes and reservoirs. The weight limit on boats undertaking towed watersports affects only the largest wake producing boats. Boaters are completely free to boat in the Newberg Pool and the majority of watersports would continue unaffected. This bill would simply limit activities causing the most severe environmental and safety consequences.

Please support SB 1589.

Thank you,
Christine Brecht