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On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure: SB1590

I live on the upper Willamette River in Wilsonville, and our family has a wake surfing boat. We bought the boat before we moved here, and it exceeds the current weight limits for towed watersports. We keep the boat on our dock during the summer.

I have two young daughters and this past summer I took my eldest out to learn how to wakesurf with her two young cousins. It was a magic moment for our family; no one was watching TV or on their phone. Instead, it was a fun, active family day outdoors that the kids will remember forever... and it was a crime. It was a crime because surfing has been banned on the upper Willamette, and our boat isn't allowed to do any towed sports.

But we go anyway, and the Sheriff's deputies don't do anything to stop us. I've politely explained to them that we're going to continue surfing and we don't mean any disrespect; we've just decided to carry on with our family fun as an act of peaceful civil disobedience. We were delighted to discover the Sheriff has no problem with this, they simply don't support the law and won't enforce it as long as surfers stay in what were formerly the surf zones.

The Sheriff is focused on the zones because many of the loudest voices trying to impose these limits on family boating are chiefly concerned with one thing: preserving the poorly built docks they have on the river. The zones are at least in part focused on concentrating wake sports where fewer people have docks. This is because many of the "concerned citizens" who own property on the river don't want to spend the money to build and maintain docks that can handle wakes. Even though the rivers ARE PUBLIC LAND, they view their docks and the river as their property. It is not.

Because we live on the river and we have a boat slip on the river, I accept that we'll need to pay a lot to maintain our dock. I accept our dock must be built to a high standard so it can withstand regular sizable wakes. I understand that the state is doing us a favor by allowing us to have a dock on the public waterway, and I accept that our family has no more right to the river than anyone else.

I see our dock much like a blanket we put down in a public park for a picnic. It's not our park, but we are establishing our own little comfortable territory in the park. We have no more right to the park than anyone else, and other people enjoying the park might occasionally impinge on our enjoyment when a dog or frisbee finds its way into our picnic. This would never upset me, because I want to live in a world where we can

all enjoy parks and rivers together. Part of what I'm teaching my girls at the park on the river and in life is that in a community, people need to find a middle ground, respect each other, and learn to live and play in the same spaces in harmony.

The absolute saddest thing about this whole mess is that it's brought divisive political ideology and rhetoric to a place it doesn't belong... the river. Everywhere I've ever been on a boat in my life, everyone waves to each other. On the upper Willamette now, that isn't the case. It's neighbor vs neighbor, and there are teams, and if you wave to someone who isn't on your team, they aren't waving back. All so some people can wait a few more years before spending the \$50K their dock needs to be safe. I know \$50k is a lot of money, but it's hard to cry for the people who own multimillion-dollar homes/land on the water and think the solution to preserving their old rickety dock is to shut down wake sports for everyone else. Make no mistake, this isn't about the environment or fish or erosion; it's about the old docks.

Whatever happens with this bill, our family is going to keep going out, we're going to keep surfing, and we're going to keep waving to everyone, hoping the day comes soon when we can be a community once again. The question before you is, should our days of wholesome family fun be a crime?

If you read this, thank you.