

Submitter: Debbi Strand

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure: SB1590

Dear Oregon Legislature,

February 11, 2024

We urge you to vote against SB 1590, which would repeal important laws related to boats and towed sports/towed watersports. In particular, SB 1590 would repeal SB 1589, an important bill passed that helped stop the previous unmitigated large motorboat wake damage to Willamette River Newberg Pool region docks, shorelines and associated habitats, and improved safety for non-motorized waterway users (frequently jeopardized by 3+ foot wakes from ballasted boats and unlawful boat driver behavior with wake surfers closer than 300' from a dock). Boater education for basic and towed watersports already exists in SB 1589.

We are Willamette riverfront home owners near river marker 40. Our family has lived in this area of the Willamette River since 1970, and we bought a neighboring house in 2000; we have been avid boaters for years with a 1986 traditional ski boat (max loading weight <<5,000#).

SB 1590 will allow significant large boat/ballasted boat wake damage to again occur on the Willamette River. A science approach to this issue of damage caused by these large motorboat (>5,000#) wakes: There is a Univ of MN study that wakesurfing boats put out 3 to 9 times more wave energy than non-wakesurfing boats at 100 feet and 3 times the wave energy at 500 feet. The study also found that wakesurfing boats require distances greater than 500 ft to attenuate wake wave characteristics (height, energy, and power) to levels equivalent to non-wakesurfing boats operating under typical planing conditions. The Willamette River in the Newberg Pool region is not wide enough to accommodate waves from the large motorboats >5,000#. Passage of SB 1590 would repeal any limits on boat size and wake damage potential.

Before SB 1589 passed in 2022, we and our neighbors personally experienced dock damage due to large, ballasted motorboats pulling wake surfers 100-150 feet from our dock; their large wake size/energy has caused hoop shear and dock frame damage/floatation loss, which is very costly to repair. In May of 2019, it cost us \$3,000 for an emergency hoop repair after a fully ballasted wakesurfing boat produced 3-4 foot wakes and boated so close to our dock that we witnessed an upriver hoop dislodge out of the dock; we also had to pay an additional \$20,000 for frame repair & floatation replacement from summer 2019 large motorboat cumulative large wake energy damage. We have a number of neighbors who have had to spend thousands of dollars between 2019-2022 (until SB 1589 passed) to replace dock

floatation which was lost due to large wakes dislodging and displacing their floatation. Law enforcement is stretched thin and may not always be available to enforce large motorboat watersport/wake surfing violations, and the number of large boat drivers who disregard the laws is unfortunate and endangers lives when they drive too close to nonmotorized boaters and swimmers near docks.

Please vote against SB 1590 and keep the boating laws as outlined in SB 1589 to continue to safely educate boaters and limit large, ballasted motorboat towed watersport/wake surfing activities to river areas wide enough to allow wake size/wake energy dissipation, help prevent boating injuries to persons using the river in non-motorized capacity, prevent further damage to homeowner property/docks, and prevent further damage to the local riverbank habitats.

Thank you,
Jon & Debbi Strand