

Submitter: Donald Fuchs

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure: SB1590

I oppose SB 1590.

The damaging effects of large wakes have been known and settled for more than 15 years when wakeboats began using artificial means of enhancing their wakes. Back in 2008 the OSMB passed rules that prevented the use of artificial wake enhancing devices on boats which settled the issue until technology evolved and the rules became difficult to enforce because of outdated language. The current bill that 1590 is an attempt to revoke a highly negotiated piece of legislation that took several years to pass in which both sides came together to find a solution that balanced the interests of ALL river users and interests. 1590 will set us back years and it ignores the scientific research and Newberg Pool based data used to construct the current legislation (a lot of time and money went into this research). The Willamette River is a narrow waterway with soft and high sandy silt banks with little structure and no protection against the impact of unnatural large ocean sized wakes against the banks. This causes significant damage to the banks and the fish and wildlife ecosystem along the shoreline within the river. Additionally, the damage to private and public property and shoreline, the disruption of ALL other river users (kayaking, fishing, swimming, skiing, paddle boarding, etc.) creates safety, environmental and enjoyment issues for these other user groups. The current legislation was passed because there was significant scientific research and data that were used by legislators and all parties to support the current negotiated legislation that is in place and is working well. The past two years have seen significant improvements with the current rules in place that balance all of the interests in the river. By passing SB 1590 we will be going backwards and will revert back to a state of unbalance and conflict within the river interests and users that the current legislation avoids. Rather than caving into large money from a well funded boating PAC from outside the state and a very small subset of boaters (very large wake surfing boats), let's preserve this natural resource for future generations and spend our precious legislative resources on other more important interests. There are many other local bodies of water that are far more appropriate for wake surfing recreation and are easily accessible. Thank you.