

Submitter: Eric Finch

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure: SB1590

Dear Chair Golden and Committee Members,

My name is Eric Finch and my family of 8 are somewhat new to the boating community. We purchased our first boat during the Pandemic about 3 years ago. We have loved the family bonding and new experiences the River Community and Boating Community has to offer.

Prior to buying a Tow Boat, we actively rafted, kayaked and paddle boarded in lots of Oregon waterways. Since there are many more water options that don't have power boats, we never worried about the issues originally presented in SB 1589 a couple of years ago.

When SB 1589 was passed, my boat was still allowed to be used in the Newberg Pool and I received the stickers allowing us to tow. When I applied to renew last year, I was told it now does not meet the requirements because I could have added more ballast to my boat, even though I don't have it. Rather confusing and very frustrating.

Up until 2 Summers ago, my family was out on the Willamette River 3-4 times/week in front of Willamette Park in West Linn. This had not been part of the Newberg Pool prior to SB 1589. It was the perfect area for Wakeboarding and Wake Surfing.

Key Point:

It doesn't make sense to have extended the Newburg Pool to include the length from the Tualatin River inlet to Willamette Falls. This section is relatively unused by tow boats (I have videos showing this), both banks are very rocky (no sandy shores), the river is deep, there are no private docks, and only a handful of houseboats very near the Falls. It's a long, safe area for both Wake Surfing and Wake Boarding. Non-motorized users stay in the area of the Tualatin Inlet and South, where the Willamette is shallow.

SB 1590 would again take this area out of the Newberg Pool zone, and only allow surfing in 2 small areas of the Newberg Pool.

Please Vote YES on SB 1590 to allow our family to get back on the river together again!

Thank You,
Eric Finch