

Submitter: Courtney Layne

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure: SB1590

My name is Courtney Layne and I support SB 1590. I live in Tualatin, and I am a lifetime resident of Oregon. I have been a boat owner for 30 years. My family and I actively participate in many summer watersports activities on Willamette River in the Newberg Pool. We paddle board, we kayak, and we engage in towed watersports as well. I understand this is a hard issue to solve.

When the current rules were being debated there were a lot of statistics being cited on how few boats were going to be affected by the rule change. I don't know what the stats are, but what I have seen on the river over the last few years is that many boating families were negatively affected. Before the rule change you would see lots of families out enjoying the river. Now when we go out, we might see 25% of the number of boats. Before the most recent rule changes parking at the Hebb Park boat ramp was always full on any summer weekend day. Now, it is maybe ½ full on the weekends. And weekdays, there might be 1-5 boat trailers there. If you are a paddle sport enthusiast, you might think this is perfect, but it does not seem fair to the boaters that cannot boat on the river anymore. Rolling the rules back where there were dedicated use areas provided a way where everyone can use the river equally.

The current rules are not well written. For the last two years, I was able to get a towed endorsement for my boat on the Newberg Pool. When I tried to renew this year, I was denied because the OSMB has changed how they are interpreting the rules. The explanation I was given was that my boat has a possible maximum ballast above the limit. It has nothing to do with what the actual maximum ballast is of my boat. Let me put this another way that might make more sense. Pretend that we ban V8 engines on a stretch of road. I drive a car with a V6 engine, but my car could be sold with a V8. I cannot drive down the road because I could have a V8, even though I only have a V6. I do not have the extra ballast in my boat, but it does not matter because my boat has it as an option so, it is disqualified.

Let's also review the expansion of the OSMB definition of the Newberg pool to include the stretch of river between the falls and the confluence of the Tualatin River. This effectively banned surfing and other towed water sports on this stretch of river. Why was this done? There are almost no docks below the Tualatin River. The banks on both sides of the river are man-made and will not erode. And all the paddle sports enthusiasts that recreate in this stretch of the river head upriver towards the narrows. This seems like the perfect spot to share the river with boaters. It almost seems like there was an agenda to ban boats rather than find a fair and compromised solution that benefits everyone. Let's make sure we are stuck in that

situation again. We need people to look at this objectively.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you will move this forward so we can find solutions that are fair and balanced for everyone who enjoys this water way.