

Submitter: Jozie Donaghey
On Behalf Of: Youth recreation
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB301

I have been a paddling instructor with Girl Scouts for over 10 years and an Oregon resident my whole life. I use the Willamette River through the Newberg pool for recreational, educational, conservation and economic canoe and kayak trips as a guide. And I oppose SB 301 due to its economic, safety, ecological and discriminatory impacts on the Newberg pool.

With Girl Scouts we take groups of kids on educational and training multi-day trips in the summer to do trash clean ups along the river, learn about riparian habitat and river ecology, and instill a level of confidence, leadership and decision making only available in a high adventure setting. However, due to the high amount of debris and trash in the river, we have to limit the sections of the river we go on to avoid class 2 and above rapids and class B+ flow. For a large majority of small crafts and non-rafting youth programs this tends to be the case.

Changing weight requirements for large boats is not a push for inclusivity. Lets call a spade, a spade: Its a loophole. And its a loophole that will make a large recreational area already benefiting larger boats less safe and inclusive for a high majority of other users. This includes youth programs like ours, that are already severely limited to specific sections of the Willamette River. By increasing boat size to the Newberg pool, this area will also become too hazardous for small craft users, swimmers, floaters and fishers. In such a highly trafficked, accessible area where a majority of large boats are already allowed, who does this truly benefit?

It does not benefit the land. We know large wakes quickly and severely erode the river banks; Damaging trees, private and public property. It does not benefit the ecosystem. We know this causes damage to habitat for vital and protected species, removes viable habitat altogether and damages and removes native plants and species already at risk. It does not benefit low income residents who can only afford a small boat, tube or floaties and infact could cause an economic discrimination between who can afford larger boats to be able to use the Newberg pool. It does not benefit tourists and the travel economy, most of which rent smaller boats under 5,000 lbs to experience our river anf may now take their business elsewhere. It does not benefit locals, families, small craft users or youth programs. We know larger boats and larger wakes are a safety hazard to public health and will make the Newberg pool more dangerous for a majority of people to use at the most severe, and less accessible at the least.

And thats what this is supposed to be about, right? Inclusivity, accessibility. But for

who? I know its not for me, the small businesses I work for, the kids and low income families I guide, my family that recreates here in the summer, the conservation work I do picking up trash and protecting the ecosystem or the tourist, travel and recreation economy that bolsters these local communities.

Thats why I am in opposition to SB 301 and I hope those making this decision will agree to side with the true nature of accessibility and inclusivity and decline SB 301. Our river is for everyone, but everyone should abide by what is good for the common order.