

Submitter: Steve McLaren

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB301

Dear Senate Committee on Energy and Environment,

My name is Steve McLaren and I'm an active user of the upper falls area or the Willamette River. I am writing you to express my strong support for Senate Bill 301. The towed water sports community has a very simple and reasonable request with this legislation to be treated equally to all other boat users in the deep waters of the Newberg Pool.

It was my understanding that these regulations originated with a few in power positions, that didn't want wakes in front or near their docks. This had become a blanket law covering the entire Willamette from Newberg to Portland. Areas that my family and friends use like the upper falls in West Linn have no docks and very little paddle boaters is caught up in this and eliminates the only waterways for wake boat use.

Many boaters with ballast capability are unfairly excluded from participating in their favorite activities, such as tubing, water skiing and wakeboarding in the Newberg Pool, because their unused ballast weight is counted toward the overall weight limit. Today, a fishing or pontoon boat with a dry weight of 5,500 pounds is eligible to tow a tuber in the Newberg Pool, but an everyday recreational boat with a much lower dry weight cannot because it has ballast capability, which is prohibited.

I do not believe legislators intended to exclude more than 90% of new recreational boat models from the river, crushing local small businesses and making it almost impossible for everyday people to buy qualifying boats. We want to have the opportunity to share the river, have fun with our families and safely enjoy the sports we love for a few months out of the year.

With this legislation, the Newberg Pool will remain one of Oregon's most highly regulated water bodies.

Please support local small businesses and families like mine by passing this small yet meaningful ask.

Respectfully,
Responsible boat owner operator,

Steve McLaren