

Testimony in Opposition to SB301

Deborah Diers – March 25, 2025

Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to strongly oppose SB301 and its -1 amendment, which would allow ballast to motorboats in the Newberg Pool area of the Willamette River.

The Willamette River is composed of highly erosive bed and bank materials. Increasing the weight of boats—especially large wake boats—will significantly accelerate erosion, damaging the river’s ecosystem and shoreline stability.

Since the passage of SB1589, recreational use of the river has greatly improved. By limiting large wake boats in this narrow, environmentally sensitive section of the river, more people have been able to enjoy the water safely. The diversity of river users has expanded, including paddlers, kayakers, swimmers, and smaller motorboats, all of whom previously faced safety concerns due to the disruptive presence of heavy wake boats.

Additionally, SB1589 empowers the Marine Board to study and recommend any necessary changes to weight limits. SB301 is unnecessary and threatens to undo the progress we have made in creating a more accessible and environmentally sustainable river for all.

I urge you to vote **NO** on SB301.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Deborah Diers

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