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On Behalf Of:

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Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB301

Recreational boating is a vital part of the Pacific Northwest's culture, economy, and community well-being. Our region is defined by its stunning waterways, offering everyone—regardless of where they live or their background—access to adventure, relaxation, and connection with nature. Boating fosters a sense of community, supports local businesses, and encourages outdoor recreation that benefits both physical and mental health.

Restricting access to our waterways to only those who live on the river or belong to a specific group is not only unfair but also goes against the spirit of inclusivity that defines this region. These waters are a shared resource, meant to be enjoyed by all who respect and care for them. Limiting access undermines the public's right to experience and appreciate the natural beauty that makes the Pacific Northwest so special. Instead of exclusion, we should focus on responsible and sustainable boating practices that ensure our waterways remain accessible, safe, and preserved for generations to come.

A key part of this responsibility is boater education. Safe and respectful boating requires knowledge of navigation rules, right-of-way, no-wake zones, and environmental considerations. However, understanding the rules and regulations of a river or lake shouldn't be limited to boaters alone—paddlers, swimmers, and even waterfront property owners should also be aware of waterway laws and etiquette. A well-informed community fosters safer interactions on the water, ensuring that all who enjoy these public resources can do so responsibly and harmoniously.