

Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

Oregon State Legislature

Re: Opposition to SB 301 – Protect Public Safety in Newberg Pool

Honorable members of the committee,

My name is **Sassan Rahbari**. I have been a homeowner along the Newburg Pool for the past 8 years. I am a recreational boat owner, enjoy water sports, and the beautiful Willamette River. I am thankful for the opportunity to share my experience regarding the impact of wake boats in the Newburg Pool.

Living along River Mile 42, I witnessed the clear contrast between normal water sport activities since SB-1589 was put into effect versus the summer of 2019 when we were unfortunate enough to be in a “Wake Zone” and wake boats made it unsafe to be on the river in smaller boats.

During the summer of 2019 wake boats were running up and down the river and creating 3’ waves that constantly crashed onto the shoreline. The river wasn’t safe, especially when wake boats would inevitably cross each other. We were thrown off our paddle boards and our kayak was nearly swamped once. We realized we could not take part in river activities when wake boats were around. We couldn’t even stand on our dock without getting knocked down due to the large wakes. Our dock was damaged as a result of violent movements that year and we lost a row of trees along the shoreline.

Fortunately, the following year we were no longer in a “wake zone” and subsequently wake boat traffic significantly dropped after SB1589 was passed. We have been able to enjoy the river again. Considering what we experienced before and after SB1589 was passed, **it is clear that large wakes created by wake-boat traffic made the river unsafe for others and their absence has made Newberg pool safer and enjoyable by all.**

According to information from the boat industry and boat-owner forums, the average weight of a recreational boat is 2500 lbs and larger boats can weigh double that amount. But **wake boats are specifically designed to create wakes of over 2 ½ feet to be ideal for wake surfing.** Their impact is significant within 300 feet, which is a conservative estimate based on my experience.

When 2 wake boats cross each other while towing in the Newburg Pool, they are forced to be <200 feet away from the shoreline. The river is simply too narrow to accommodate wake boats that tow in the Newburg Pool. Therefore I urge you to **vote NO on SB-301.**

Thank you!