

Submitter: Gary Brashear

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 Gary Brashear, and I'm an active user of the Willamette River. I strongly support Senate Bill 301, which seeks fair treatment for the towed water sports community in the Newberg Pool.

Currently, boats with ballast capability are unfairly restricted from activities like tubing, water skiing, and wakeboarding in the Newberg Pool because their unused ballast weight counts toward the overall weight limit. For example, a 5,500-pound fishing or pontoon boat can tow a tuber, but a recreational boat with lower dry weight is excluded due to ballast capability.

This legislation would clarify rules, making it easier for the Oregon State Marine Board to manage and for boaters to understand. The current "maximum ballast capacity" rule is confusing and punitive, hurting families who bought boats with smaller ballast capacities, only to be denied permits due to manufacturer models with larger ballast.

Passing this bill would protect local small businesses and allow families to safely enjoy the river and their favorite water sports. With existing regulations in place, this small adjustment will ensure fair access for everyone.

Please support Senate Bill 301.

Respectfully,  
Gary Brashear