

Submitter: Zach Reichle

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB301

I am writing in strong support of SB 301, which advocates for the towed watersports community. As someone who has spent my entire life on this river — from my first boat ride at just five months old to countless days skiing, wakeboarding, and surfing — it is devastating to see these opportunities stripped away by the voices of a few. The current legislation excludes over 90% of boat owners, while still allowing large vessels like pontoon boats, often pulling tubes and creating waves larger than those from surf boats, to operate. Additionally, the majority of modern boats are built with a dry weight of around 6,000 pounds, meaning this effort is not just about restricting certain activities — it's essentially an attempt to ban most boats altogether. Even with the passage of SB 301, the Newberg Pool will remain one of the most highly regulated bodies of water in the nation, just for people to enjoy what they love to do. The reasoning behind these restrictions the past few years is not rooted in scientific, evidence-based reasoning — it's about control. How can a small group of people believe they have the right to control a public body of water? This decision has not only impacted individuals like myself, who have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in my boat and equipment, but it has also severely harmed local businesses that rely on a thriving boating community, including Active Water Sports, Pacific NW Boat Sports, and River City Boat Sales. Furthermore, most homeowners who have spent millions to live on the river don't even support unethical nature of what has gone on the past few years. The disproportionate influence of a small group should not outweigh the majority who cherish and responsibly enjoy this waterway. I urge you to pass SB 301 to restore enjoyment in the community, support local businesses, and protect the recreational traditions that mean so much to us all.