



**LD 693 (HP 462)**

"An Act to Protect Inland Water Quality, Shorelines, Wildlife and Public Safety by Prohibiting Operation of a Wake Boat to Create an Enhanced Wake Close to Shore or in Shallow Water"

Representative Walter Riseman of Harrison  
Representative James Boyle of Gorham

Honorable Representatives,

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to be heard today.

We are disappointed in this bill having been created without any industry input. We are one of three high volume water sports boat dealers within 8 miles of the LEA in Bridgton, all who donate to various organizations including the LEA and none of us were contacted over the past 3 years.

We are in opposition to this bill for a number of reasons. Should this poorly-crafted bill [LD 693] pass into law, it will restrict, prohibit and potentially ban wakesurfing from a significant number of bodies of water within our state.

There is an implication here that surf boats create a symmetrical wave on both sides needing 500' to dissipate. All other studies have shown 200' to be sufficient. Wake surfing boats produce a wave on only one side of the boat. The other side is a crumble of water with limited wake displacement. If the boat wake is presented to the open side of the lake you will see even more buffer as the opposite side crumble can be well within 200' and have no effect onshore. When speaking to members of the exploratory committee in support of LD 693 after 3 years of study they are surprised and admit to not knowing the boats operate in this fashion, which brings me to my next point.

Education. Boating education is typically focused on general boating and ocean safety. The education process should broaden its scope in to lake based laws and rules, to include many things, but specifically, the safe passage (200' rule), water sports safety, wake responsibility, respect on the water, etc.

Education, Education, Education. That's the key here.

Property values are a concern to those favoring regulation & restriction. Have they considered what happens to property values of non-recreational/restricted waters? The value can be 50% of recreational waterways.

The local economy will undoubtedly be affected. Marinas, restaurants, water sport gear retailers, etc.

The "peer reviewed study" is flawed in using 1 empty 20' recreational bow rider as a benchmark. The most popular segment of boats on lakes is 23' in length. Also, what happens to our shores with a 30'+ day boat weighing 2 tons more than any wakeboat which constantly plow water at low speeds cruising near shore?

We're hearing rumblings of Summer Camps potentially excluded from this bill? Why? Camps typically run multiple boats from 8am-5pm daily for water sports. However, Mr. & Mrs. Taxpayer who contribute to the local economy, will not have the ability to enjoy their lake house making memories with their family?

Here's a real world example: We'll be out on our boat and see an operator set a wake towards the shoreline and start rocking boats. We will drive over and point it out and suggest they should stay 200' from shore and set the wake towards the big part of the lake. More often than not the 'weekend warrior' has not even considered setting the wake to the big part of the lake. Why would they? No one has ever shown them otherwise. After an embarrassing "Sorry" and "Thank you for pointing it out!" they change the direction of the wave and we can all continue enjoy the lake moving forward.

It takes initiative. Our stores have signs posted and required our consumers take a Wake Responsibility Pledge: Being responsible for your own wake, keeping music levels at a respectful volume, minimizing repetitive passes and staying 200' from shore. It's all about education.

The average wake boat is now in the \$200,000.00 + range which equates to \$11,000/unit in Maine State Sales Tax. The injection of income from having these owners vacation or purchase second houses in Maine and not a neighboring state allowing wake surfing on all waterways is crucial.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Being exclusive to this segment, we spend a lot of time in and behind the boats on the water. If we can be of service in any way please don't hesitate to ask.

Best,

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