



**March 22, 2023**

**TESTIMONY ON LD 693 ATTRIBUTED TO BRAD FRALICK OF THE WATER SPORTS INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION**

**Chairpersons LaFountain, Landry and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee,**

**My name is Brad Fralick and I am the Chief Government Affairs Officer of the Water Sports Industry Association (WSIA). Our national trade association represents all aspects of the towed watersports segment of the recreational boating industry. Our members include manufacturers, retailers, and ancillary equipment suppliers and of course, customers encompassing the sports of waterskiing, tubing, wakesurfing, wakeboarding and parasailing.**

**I am here to express our organization's opposition to LD 693. The WSIA was formed over 40 years ago with the mission of educating all enthusiasts of towed water sports on the best practices with regard to safety and etiquette on the water. Having ski boats, pontoons and wakeboats within our scope—we are no stranger to the controversy that can develop on small lakes with wakesurfing. Wakesurfing is a unique sport in which a specially designed boat creates an artificially tall wake in which a rider surfs without being pulled by a tow rope. In order to create this tall wake the boat must be in deep water, to try this in shallow water would result in a wake a fraction the size of a deep water one and certainly not surfable. This reality causes the boats to do their sport in deep water, one would not knowingly try in shallow water. The key word in this sentence is knowingly, since wake boats can be bought used, there is no absolute guarantee that the owner would have gone through our dealer's mandatory wakesurfing education program at the time of purchase (this is a requirement for all new boats sold). This is where education comes in. Because of the environmental damage that could be caused by attempting to wakesurf in an area where you shouldn't, we strongly**

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urge, and will assist the Department in every way possible, that the Department launch a statewide education effort to inform boaters of where they should be engaging in the sport. The WSIA did such a statewide program in Maryland in 2019. Based upon WSIA's Wake Responsibly curriculum, WSIA and the State of Maryland placed signs at every boat launch ramp and created tens of thousands of educational flyers for marinas, hotels and restaurants. We even had theaters show PS education videos prior to showing the main feature. In 2023 WSIA has digitized our Wake Responsibly curriculum and it will be available free of charge to state agencies across the country in May. We would be honored if the State of Maine would avail themselves to this curriculum.

We wholeheartedly feel that education is always the best first step to impact a problem and urge this approach rather than the passage of LD 693.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

(height, energy, and power) to levels equivalent to non-wakesurf boats operating under typical planing conditions. A second example, in which the largest wave was used as reference for the non-wakesurf boats (Condition 1a), an operational distance of 425 ft or greater was required. These results are summarized in the table below.

**Results for required operational distance illustrating how data from this study may be used**

Reference condition	Operational distance required by wakesurf boat to attenuate to reference condition levels
<p>Example 1 non-wakesurf boat planing at an operational distance of 200 ft (Condition 2 - planing)</p>	<p>Maximum Wave Height: &gt;500 ft. Total Wave Energy: &gt;575 ft. Maximum Wave Power: &gt;600 ft.</p>
<p>Example 2 non-wakesurf boat transition to planing at an operational distance of 200 ft (Condition 1a - largest wave)</p>	<p>Maximum Wave Height: &gt;425 ft. Total Wave Energy: &gt;425 ft. Maximum Wave Power: &gt;425 ft.</p>

In addition to these conclusions, this document offers a summary of research priorities pertaining to the topic of boat-generated waves on lakes and rivers.