

**Conservation & UWEX
Education Committee**

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Conservation & UWEX Education Committee

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Committee on Forestry, Parks, and Outdoor Recreation
Representative Mursau, Chair
Room 113 West
State Capitol
PO Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708

Re: AB 656, relating to the regulation of wakesurfing and wakeboarding

Representative Mursau,

Just as farmland is seeing increased pressure to grow more crops and raise more livestock, Wisconsin lakes and rivers are seeing increased pressure from a growing population of watersport users. In particular, enhanced wakes from wakesurfing and wakeboarding have become a topic of utmost concern. These large waves can degrade shorelines, scour lake bottoms, and negatively affect wildlife and other lake users.

Our lakes are integral to the recreational base of the economy of Oneida County. For this reason, the Oneida County Conservation and UW-Extension Education (CUW) Committee would like to see legislation enacted that would set meaningful protection measures in place, while balancing the rights of citizens to recreate on their favorite waterbody. We feel the legislation currently proposed fails to set minimum standards for the protection of private property, public safety, and aquatic environments.

Recommendations:

1. Revise Line 11, page 3 to read "within ~~200~~ 500 feet of a shoreline or a dock, pier, boathouse, or other structure located completely or partly on the body of water".
2. Prohibit enhanced wake creation in waters shallower than 30 feet in depth.
3. Address the transfer of aquatic invasive species through ballast water tanks and/or bladders.
4. Allow local governments local control to set their own standards beyond state minimums.

On behalf of the entire CUW Committee, I urge the Wisconsin Legislature to engage in meaningful discussions with stakeholders and pass standards that are based on sound, science-based solutions. By doing so, we feel a balance can be struck that will both protect our lakes and the rights of all citizens who recreate on them.

Thank you for your time.

Jim Winkler
Chair, Oneida County CUW Committee