



TERRY MOULTON



WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

23RD SENATE DISTRICT

From: Senator Terry Moulton

To: Senate Committee on Agriculture, Small Business and Tourism
Members of the Committee

Re: Testimony regarding Senate Bill 180
Restrictions to persons operating a motorboat towing a person on water skis

Date: June, 3, 2015

Modeled after Minnesota law, this bill exempts motorboats equipped with a wide-view rear-facing mirror from having an on-board observer while towing a person on waterskis, wakeboard, tubes or similar aquaplane devices. Current Wisconsin law dictates that 3 people are required for recreational watersports involving towing a person behind watercraft; an operator, an observer, and the skier. **This bill effectively allows, with the right safety equipment, 2 people to engage in watercraft sports that involve towing.**

In 2010 Minnesota had 200,000 more registered boats than Wisconsin, and no requirement for a spotter when skiing, yet last year, according to the US Coast guard, the two states both had just 8 skier-related accidents. Compared to Wisconsin, Minnesota had around 27% fewer boating accidents in the last 5 years.

This safe and practical change has the potential to benefit people throughout Wisconsin and those who visit our lakes from out-of state. **According to the Department of Transportation, of all those who traveled to Wisconsin in 2013 for Marketable Overnight trips (not visiting family, friends, or on business), 72% had two or fewer adults in their party.**

This bill comes at constituent request and allows for broader participation in recreational watersports on our lakes - especially residents and tourists who enjoy our lakes with just one other person.

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