

## Proponent Testimony on House Bill 284:

Chairman McClain, Vice Chairman Dobos, Ranking Members Grim, and members of the House Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 284, to allow a rearview mirror instead of an extra person to observe water skiers.

My name is Doug Willis, and I have been deeply immersed in the world of water sports since I was 7 years old. Over the years, I've explored various disciplines, from barefoot skiing to wakeboarding, and have even competed across Tennessee, Michigan, and Ohio. Waterskiing isn't just a hobby for me because I also take great joy in teaching others to ski.

I am here to express my support for HB 284. Having spent countless hours on the water, I can attest to the importance of safety measures while engaging in water sports activities. However, I've also experienced firsthand the frustration of finding a reliable observer to accompany me while skiing. In many cases, the wide field of vision in the rearview mirror is more effective than an observer that isn't paying attention or is distracted by their phone.

I believe that this bill is a practical solution to this issue. Allowing watercraft operators to use rearview mirrors to observe skiers is a step in the right direction. This approach aligns with the trend in many states towards an "either-or" approach, recognizing that modern features can provide effective alternatives to an observer. It's worth noting that many skiers are already venturing out without observers due to practical constraints.

This legislation promotes both safety and accessibility for water sports enthusiasts. If other states have successfully implemented similar measures, I see no reason why Ohio cannot do the same. HB 284 is a positive step forward.

Thank you for considering my testimony. I am available to provide any further insights or answer any questions you may have.