



March 28th, 2023

House Economic Development and Small Business Committee  
Honorable Chair Rep. Janelle Bynum  
Honorable Vice Chair Rep. Lily Morgan  
Honorable Vice Chair Rep. Daniel Nguyen

RE: Testimony in support of HB 2023

Chair Bynum, Vice Chairs Morgan and Nguyen, and Member of the Committee,

My name is Jon Isaacs, and I am the Vice President of Public Affairs for the Portland Business Alliance (the Alliance), greater Portland's Chamber of Commerce. We represent over 2100 businesses primarily across the seven-county metro region of Portland. We also represent the central city Portland through our affiliates at Downtown Portland Clean & Safe, and provide diversity equity and inclusion workplace programming through our affiliates at Partners in Diversity.

The Alliance urges the committee to support HB 2023.

Last week, the Alliance and several members of the State of Sport coalition spoke with this committee about the tremendous opportunity our state has to build a long-term economic development strategy to catalyze the sports industry and benefit every corner of Oregon. This opportunity was outlined in detail in the 2022 State of Sport report, which, for the first time measured the tremendous economic benefit the sports apparel, outdoor equipment, outdoor recreation industries have delivered to Oregon. Passage of HB 2023 is essential to the realization of this strategic economic opportunity.

Youth sports and youth sporting events have grown to become a national, and even international industry. Hosting signature events can provide a significant economic boost to host communities through tourism and facilities upgrades. Not only do these events bring visitors to Oregon and its local communities, but they also reinforce the fact that Oregon is a premier destination for athletic and recreational opportunities. HB 2023 will help ensure that Oregon's communities are able to recruit and host youth sports events and provide access to Oregon youth to high level community-based competitions.

A collaboration between the Oregon Travel Commission and Sport Oregon will ensure that funds will be invested wisely to support a variety of opportunities across Oregon. The program will be created to ensure direct local government engagement and will allow the fund to support a variety of event types.

We strongly encourage you to support HB 2023 and create the Youth Sports Grant Program that will position Oregon as one of the essential destinations for youth sports to support hospitality and tourism. And most importantly, to strengthen communities across Oregon through greater access to youth sports and activities.

Thank you for your time.

**Jon Isaacs** (*he/him*)

*Vice President, Public Affairs*

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