



Testimony on SB 1539
Submitted by the Portland Trail Blazers
Senate Rules Committee
February 13, 2024

Chair Lieber, Vice Chair Knopp, and members of the committee:

The Portland Trail Blazers are great allies of Sport Oregon and in strong support of SB 1539.

The Trailblazers have been proudly playing professional basketball in Oregon for more than 50 years. Our experience has been that youth sports brings communities together and are embraced by civic partners, businesses, and most important, families whose children participate in sports.

We are of the belief that hosting signature events can provide a much-needed economic boost to communities throughout the state. 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.

SB 1539 will assist Oregon's communities in hosting such events helping ensure our youth will have more direct, less expensive access to these activities. We believe that funds will be wisely invested in support of a variety of opportunities across Oregon.

The manner in which the program will be created will ensure direct local government engagement and will allow the funds to support numerous opportunities over this biennium. As our state and region continue to emerge from a stressful economic period, we support any effort that encourages economic activity.

The Youth Sports Grant Program will offer an opportunity to use the strength and power of youth sports to support hospitality and tourism as well as positively impact the mental health of our youth in a proactive manner. Of perhaps greater importance, investing in youth sports will do more for making local communities stronger.

Thank you for supporting Oregon youth sports and we urge you to pass SB 1539.