

February 15, 2024

Sen. Girod, Rep. Holvey, Members of the Capital Construction Subcommittee:

I support HB 5201 with modest state funding for a city-owned multiuse stadium in Hillsboro.

I am a baseball fan, but I am **not** writing this as a baseball fan. I am a current student in a Financing Sport course through Oregon State University, but I am **not** writing in that capacity. I am a seasonal gate greeter for the Hillsboro Hops minor league baseball team, but I am **not** writing in that role.

I am writing as an Oregon citizen in support of the sound investment of taxpayer money.

No investment comes without risk. On the flip side, the failure to make investments carries risk.

The proposed \$120 million project calls for \$82 million in private funding, a higher percentage than typically found in similar ventures around the country. Nevertheless, the project is dependent on the fiscal teamwork of the City of Hillsboro, Washington County, the State of Oregon, and the Washington County Visitors Association.

Once opened, the new stadium is projected to generate \$64 million in annual economic activity, according to a 2023 ECONorthwest study, with \$3 million in annual state and local taxes. At that rate the state would recoup a \$15 million investment in less than seven years. The economic benefits to the state would extend well into the future.

The proposed stadium, unlike the Hops' current facility, would be a multiuse venue generating year-round economic activity, an infusion that justifies the commitment of state funds.

A new facility is needed because Major League Baseball in 2020 imposed higher stadium standards on the 120 minor league teams that survived contraction. Faced with daunting costs, the Hillsboro Hops management could have abandoned minor league baseball altogether but instead renewed its commitment to Hillsboro, Washington County, and the State of Oregon.

The Hillsboro Hops are not part of an outside minor league chain seeking entry to capitalize on the Portland metropolitan market. For the past decade the Hops have been contributing members of the Oregon community. The Hops Fund has financed upgrades for area youth sports programs and provided college scholarships to first-generation students.

If funding for the stadium project falls through the Hillsboro Hops may be sold and relocated to another state. Therein lies the risk of failing to make an investment.

I recognize the demands on finite state resources. However, I ask the subcommittee to advance HB 5201 with an investment that should pay for itself and provide long-term economic dividends.

Sincerely,

Doug Killian
Portland, Oregon