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Address
1939 SW Morrison St.
Portland, OR 97205

February 15, 2024

Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Capital Construction

RE: Support for HB 5201 & HB 5202 – Hillsboro Hops Stadium Project

Dear Committee Members:

I am pleased to submit comments in support of the Hillsboro Hops Stadium Project.

Sport Oregon- Oregon's Sport Commission is a 501c 6-member organization with over 125 like-minded companies and individuals who see sports as an engine for economic development. It also operates a 501c 3 foundation that provides grants and conducts programs to support youth sports, with an emphasis on both underserved youth, young girls and increased physical activity.

Sport Oregon maintains strong relationships with local, regional and state tourist and business associations to effectively drive and contribute to the economic development & recovery efforts impacting the state through sports tourism and the sports industry ecosystem.

Sport Oregon is proud to support the Hillsboro Hops' project which promotes, and will achieve, the very spirit of what we, at Sport Oregon, strive for throughout the state.

The Hillsboro Hops have been given a unique opportunity to be one of 120 teams participating in the MLB's new Professional Development League and therefore must conform with the MLB's facility standards.

This represents not only an exciting opportunity for the baseball team, but for the larger metro region. The new and existing facilities will enrich our community and attract participation and engagement from those inside and outside the Hillsboro area.

Data has shown that sports tourism is an integral part of local and national economies across the US. Travelers attending sports tournaments, races, and other events – either as a participant or spectator represent a critical driver of the overall economy.

Sports ETA, the only trade association for the sports events and tourism industry, in its annual State of the Industry Report for 2021 cited the sports tourism sector's direct spending impact in the U.S. of \$39.7 billion and generated a total economic impact of \$91.8 billion. The sector supports 635,000 full-time and part-time jobs and generates \$12.9 billion in taxes.



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The economic numbers for this project speak for themselves, particularly during the construction phase, with ongoing benefits to the community, including an estimated \$64M in economic output, \$20M in wages annually and \$3M in state and local taxes are indicators of a solid investment.

We are excited over the fact that the new ballpark will be a catalyst for future events that can come to Hillsboro and the region- Visitors to events stay as close to the venue as possible, so this venue will absolutely result in overnight stays in Washington County- all generating revenue for the city and county. It will drive tourism, fill restaurants and boost small businesses.

We need vision and investment to position our region for growth. The best venues attract and compete for the best events, so this new venue will allow Sport Oregon to showcase this new facility to the pacific northwest and the rest of the nation. We must have the right kind of quality facilities to compete for these events. We will pursue events that span youth, to professional, from the Little league world series to MLB spring training games.

It should be added that Oregon youth and their families find themselves traveling to other states in order to participate in sporting events and end up absorbing ever-increasing transportation and lodging costs. Those facing economic difficulties often miss out on participating entirely. This project will ameliorate this strain on families.

Sport Oregon respectfully requests that the legislature consider and appropriate the investment requested to support this project.

Your support will result in a wise investment as the Hillsboro Hops, and the hundreds of sport programs, organizations and entertainers will have an opportunity to use these facilities which will benefit the region and the state.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Etzel".

Jim Etzel

CEO, Sport Oregon