

Date: February 15, 2024

From: Doug Hormann

To: The Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction.

Subj: Support for HB 5201 and Investing in a New Stadium in Hillsboro

Senator Girod, Representative Holvey and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Doug Hormann, and I am a 35-year resident of Hillsboro, a retired Deputy Sheriff of the Washington County Sheriff's Office, and a long-time supporter of sports as a healthy pursuit for people of all ages. My wife, Susan, a retired Lieutenant and Forensic Scientist with the Oregon State Police and I have raised two children in this community and have been exceedingly fortunate to have had such great amenities which support a healthy lifestyle in Hillsboro Schools, in our local community and throughout the State of Oregon. As such, I write to you in support of this bill which would provide a worthy investment in the sports infrastructure of our region.

I have been fortunate enough to enjoy the Hillsboro Hops at Ron Tonkin Stadium, both as a fan, and starting last year, as a part-time employee of the Hops. As a fan, I have noticed how, both as a participant and as a spectator, sports can often help to bridge the divide we now see due to the state of politics in our country. When I'm at the game, I might be seated next to a Democrat, a Republican or a political adherent of any stripe and we have something in common to talk about. For some reason, people leave labels behind when they walk through the gates at the park. Instead of characterizing each other as "us" or "them" we see each other as members of the community enjoying an afternoon or evening with friends and/or family, not as members of this or that interest group; just folks enjoying a ballgame. It's a very humanizing experience.

The Hops have been wonderful for Hillsboro and the region, and not always in ways that one might first expect. As well as providing affordable entertainment, the Hillsboro sports complex is home to numerous softball and baseball tournaments every season. I love it when coaches bring their young players to watch the Hops play between tournament games. These young players look up to the Hops players, many just a few years older than themselves, and see possibilities. They see people who have set goals and have worked hard to attain them. The Hops have been supportive of sports throughout the area, funding facilities improvements and making visits to schools and offering opportunities to develop skills.

I went to work for the Hops because I was bored - as some might put it, "failing retirement" - and I wanted to see more ball games. Seriously, if you're going to have a retirement job, what better place than at the ballpark! An interesting thing happened though, instead of just being one of the guys in a blue shirt, I get to do something that has made me, once again, feel like a contributing member of our community, which is to mentor young people. "Hopspitality" staff are made up of all sorts of people, but two large demographics are retirees with a wealth of work experience, and young people, often working their first paying job. It is a match made in heaven! I get a real thrill

mentoring these eager young folks and then coaching them as they learn good work habits that will have a lifelong benefit. My bosses at the park are very supportive of young employees, giving them as much responsibility as they can handle while also being tolerant of the occasional mistakes. As an experiment in developing good work habits, team and leadership skills, the environment provided by the Hops organization has been a life-affirming experience.

As you know, the Hops are facing a huge challenge that we can all help overcome. Major League Baseball has added requirements to the team that require upgraded facilities. Due to technical challenges the existing ballpark cannot meet these requirements. The lion's share of funding has already been raised by the owners of the Hops and other local resources. Our community needs the support of you on this committee to get us over the top and to keep the Hops in Hillsboro.

I know that you are tasked with appropriating a finite and valuable resource - our tax dollars. I would not be writing to you if I didn't think that supporting this bill would be in the best interests of the tax paying people of Oregon, both now and in future generations. In so doing, you will make sure that these benefits I've mentioned continue to support our community and keep it a vibrant and healthy place to live.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas J. Hormann", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Douglas J. Hormann