

Submitter: Matt Kolasinski
On Behalf Of: SW Portland Little League
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Capital Construction
Measure: HB5201

My name is Matt Kolasinski and I'm writing today to express my support for the state's support in funding the Hillsboro Hops ballpark project. I do so in 3 capacities as a dedicated and active member of the Portland Metro community.

First off, I write in my capacity as the President of the SW Portland Little League board. We are a volunteer-run organization that offers baseball and softball leagues for more than 600 kids in the Ida B. Wells High School district each year and do so in a fun, safe and rewarding environment. The Hops have supported our organization annually through field grants, which are greatly needed due to the lack of playable fields provided by Portland Parks or Portland Public Schools. The Hops also host our players at free clinics, including the annual Girl Clinic at Ron Tonkin Field each year, and offer countless opportunities for our players to be inspired by some of the best athletes in the world, playing right here in their back yard. The Hops are a vital part of keeping the games of baseball and softball going in our region and providing this crucial opportunity for kids to play, learn and grow.

Secondly, I am a board member of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce and dedicate significant time and resources to better our business community. I feel strongly that healthy and thriving businesses are needed to support vibrant communities and especially so as an income tax funded state. The Portland Metro area undoubtedly has other issues to tackle, but the ability to do so depends on a robust business community to provide long-term resources back for the state. The Hops support dozens of local businesses, including hotels, restaurants, professional services, food and beverage purveyors, etc., and are an affordable option for businesses gather their employees and families during the spring and summer. We need wins in our region and this new ballpark is undoubtedly a win on many levels.

Lastly, I write as a member of the Hops front office. I've been fortunate enough to have a 20+ career in the sports industry working for NBA, MLS and major college front offices and have called the Portland area home for most of that time. I love this industry and my time with this team has been some of the most fruitful years of my career. Our owners and President create an environment that centered around an affordable, kid-friendly fan experience that also allows for career professionals to grow. The memories created at our games each season last lifetimes and this new facility would solidify this staple of our community for generations. As a front office, we understand that impact and feel that value in the community and we want nothing more than to be able to continue this for many years to come.

The Hillsboro Hops are not just a sports franchise or a business that happens to be in Hillsboro. We are a part of the fabric of this community. We are a gathering place that's welcoming and inclusive. We are place where kids can be inspired and develop their dreams. We are a sense of purpose organization that is greater than the sum of it's parts and is a vital part of many people's lives in this region. Thank you for your consideration on this ask and I urge you to support this Capital Construction request so our community can keep all the benefits the Hops provide.