

Submitter: Paul Diller

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB110

Dear Chair Meek and Vice-chair McLane,

The positive impact of MLB in Portland would be incalculable. This region's reputation and economy have suffered greatly for the last 5 years due to one of the strictest and longest Covid shutdowns in the country, extensive looting and rioting in downtown Portland following George Floyd's murder, stagnant population growth, a highly permissive approach to drugs, rampant homelessness, public disorder, and graffiti. Bringing MLB to Portland would be an amazing chance to change the narrative regarding Portland and the metro area.

Portland deserves another major league team. For a metro area of our size to have only an NBA team among the 4 major sports leagues (NFL, MLB, NHL, and NBA) is disappointing given our population. The Portland metro area is larger than several areas that have MLB teams, including Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Milwaukee. It is larger than Las Vegas, where the former Oakland A's will be moving eventually. Unlike the aforementioned Rust Belt cities, Portland and its metro area were on a trajectory of growth until 2020. Oregon is a great baseball state with lots of interested fans, as evidenced by the strong support for OSU and UO baseball. Unfortunately, Seattle is a long way from Portland, and even longer from other areas of the state (Salem and Eugene) from which fans might attend an MLB game in Portland. Frankly, even AAA baseball would be fine, at least as a first step. It is a shame that the former AAA Portland Beavers left in 2011 because the city couldn't figure out where to site a baseball stadium for them. With all due respect to the Pickles, Portland deserves more than a summer wood-bat league. Similarly with respect to the Hillsboro Hops, the Portland metro area deserves more than just a single-A team. I urge you to support SB 110 and the -1 amendment.

Sincerely,  
Paul Diller