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On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On  
Capital Construction

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5531

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Osborn Aquatic Center (OAC) is an important asset to the region, the state, Benton County and Corvallis.

OAC hosts myriad meets and events with participants from all over the western region: Washington, California, Nevada and Idaho. Swimmers love the facility, the location and the town of Corvallis. And meet participants aren't just the fast youngsters looking to test themselves or have great meet times that might help them get scholarships. OAC also hosts an annual Special Olympics meet and is frequently the host pool for Senior Games and Oregon Masters meets. In other words, the pool serves a broad geography and a broad arrange of age and ability.

Outside of the competitive swimming domain, literally generations of Oregonians have learned to swim at Osborn. The lifeguard training program has thrived for years. We can't measure it, but we know drowning incidents have been avoided because more people, especially kids, have learned to swim at OAC.

At OAC, programs for people with limited ability provide a reduced-gravity form of exercise that can't be replicated. People with limited means take advantage of the scholarship program that allows them to participate. Otter Beach is a summer favorite that entices our friends' grandkids to visit every summer. Even the dogs in the community enjoy Otter Beach for the season-ending "dog day". Throughout the year OAC offers a spectrum of family-friendly events: even in winter we can enjoy water fun in the indoor pool.

The meets and programs have a positive economic impact on local and regional businesses. Hotels enjoy greater occupancy when there are meets and restaurants see more business (swimmers are absolutely known for their appetites—one local taqueria reportedly ran out of food!). Markets and eateries near the pool see local families on their way to/from lessons or team practice.

In short, OAC is a beloved facility locally and regionally. The levy to help fund OAC (and other community program) has been renewed without fail.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our love for OAC and hope our legislators agree that preserving this Oregon destination is important.

Heidi Hagler  
30-year Master's Swimmer