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On Behalf Of:	
Committee:	Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic:	SB1501

Opposition to SB 1501 — Misplaced Priorities at Their Worst

SB 1501 is a slap in the face to rural Oregon.

The Legislature keeps telling Oregonians there is no money—no money to fix crumbling highways, no money to stabilize ODOT, no money to help farmers survive ongoing drought, and no money to modernize irrigation systems that actually conserve water and protect the state's future.

And yet somehow there is money for a basketball arena.

ODOT is openly warning of service reductions and unsafe roads. Farm-to-market routes are deteriorating. Freight movement is being choked off. At the same time, irrigation districts and farmers are being pushed to modernize systems with little to no financial support while facing reduced water allocations and regulatory pressure from every direction.

Let's be clear: irrigation modernization saves water, strengthens senior water rights, reduces conflict, and keeps land in production. It is one of the smartest public investments Oregon can make during a drought.

A basketball arena does none of that.

This bill tells farmers, truckers, and rural communities that their livelihoods matter less than a ribbon-cutting photo op. It tells taxpayers that core infrastructure and food security come second to entertainment. It confirms what too many already believe—that rural Oregon is expected to pay the bills while urban vanity projects get the funding.

If the Legislature truly believes Oregon is in a funding crisis, then SB 1501 has no business moving forward.

Fix the roads. Fund ODOT. Invest in water conservation. Keep farms operating.

Until those needs are met, there should be zero appetite for taxpayer-funded sports facilities.

SB 1501 should be killed!

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