

Governor Kate Brown  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street, Room 254  
Salem, OR 97301

Senate President Peter Courtney  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street, S-201  
Salem, OR 97301

House Speaker Tina Kotek  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street, Room 269  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 4146

Dear Governor Brown, President Courtney, Speaker Kotek, and Members of the Legislature:

My name is Ashton Eaton and before I was an Olympian, a Gold Medal Medalist or the World Record holder, I was a little boy in La Pine, Oregon. I didn't know for sure what athletics had in store for me, but I knew that with the encouragement of my mother and the exposure to great track and field, I could go as far as my dreams would take me.

I am writing to ask you to lend your support to the legislation that will, among other things, contribute funds to the conduct of the 2021 IAAF World Championships.

I have competed in front of hundreds in tiny European towns and tens of thousands inside of an Olympic Stadium. In all of the places track has taken me I am never more moved than right here at Hayward Field.

I always knew that Hayward Field was special, but I'm not sure I felt the full force of it until June 23, 2012. During the final event of the 2012 Olympic Trials, as the crowd carried me down the homestretch to a new World Record, I learned that the magic is real. The magic is in the people who believe in this place – the Bowerman's and Pre's, the hoteliers and restaurant owners, the volunteers, the local fans who continue to come out for meets big and small, and the visitors who will arrive in greater numbers than ever for the 2021 World Championships.

As an Oregonian who has traveled the world, I have developed a consensus of the national and global view of our state. Frankly, until recently, there wasn't much to report. Track and field is a statewide passion and source of pride. As an athlete, there is no better place on earth to compete – no place more likely to pull out of you, your very best performance. This became slightly more apparent to the world when we hosted the World Junior Championships. But shall that be all we have to offer?

We must embrace the reality; Nationally, Oregon has the potential to be known as the "State of Athleticism." Worldwide, people could call Oregon "the place where athletes go." This is the home of Nike, Oregon football is practically marketing the state to the entire nation for free, and this could be the epicenter for track and field; the most popular sport within the world's most popular event; the Olympic Games. Combine the obvious growing relationship of Portland with tech and Bend with breweries and outdoor adventure, with all the diversity the state has to offer. Every Oregonian knows how lucky we are. Why doesn't everyone else? Because they haven't experienced it. They need to be here, to understand. What will attract them?

With support, the World Championships has a chance to, like a wave, splash thoughts of Oregon over the nation and the world. Not only that, it's a chance to inspire kids around our state to dream big, to affirm our place as one of the great destinations in sport, and to impact the communities and citizens of Oregon in a way that only big ideas can.

This event will touch the lives of thousands of people, young and old, across our state. While not all of them will become great athletes, each of them will be inspired to think bigger than they have before. Just as they did me, the pursuit of those grand goals will teach them lessons that will help them in life no matter what they aspire to be.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashton Eaton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ashton" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Eaton".

Ashton Eaton