

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

Please Support HB 4146

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

In 1955 a Seattle city councilman named Al Rochester proposed what at the time seemed like a truly daft idea to his constituents. Mr. Rochester felt the best way to infuse energy into the beautiful but sleepy town of Seattle was to create a festival or exposition that would bring the world to their community. Rochester and other civic leaders did not envision just any ordinary event however, they set their sights on the biggest opportunity they could imagine...the World's Fair.

Seattle's strong consortium of public and private leaders offered a unique but authentic vision in their bid for the 1962 World's Fair. Competing against New York City, San Francisco and Moscow, the little-known town of Seattle, Washington would come away victorious. The unfathomable victory, won in part by courage and determination, defied the prevalent notion that bigger must be better. The Seattle World's Fair would become a celebration of future scientific possibilities and global cultural collaboration.

Seattle's World's Fair was transformational for the community as it established a "can do" attitude, a spirit of optimism and a belief that its possibilities were limitless. Seattle resident and Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen credits the 1962 World's Fair with providing the platform to explore "what could be" and instilling a belief that open exploration of science and technology made his city "different and cool."

In addition, the city had built a glorious civic and cultural center which would form the catalyst for a literal explosion of arts and culture for decades to come. Anchored by the iconic Space Needle, the Seattle Center serves as the community's central gathering place to this day.

In 2014 another courageous visionary named Vin Lananna had the audacity to suggest that Eugene, Oregon should host the World's most significant sporting event in 2019...the World Championships of Track and Field. Not unlike Rochester, Lananna formed a strong consortium of private and public leaders to support his unique and authentic vision. Yet despite encouragement from leaders of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) to bring the

Championships to the United States for the first time, Lananna's hopes were dashed when Doha, Qatar was selected host city for 2019.

Emboldened by unwavering public and private support, Lananna quickly set his sights on the 2021 World Championships and again presented his case for bringing the crown jewel of the sport to the United States...the home of the world's greatest track and field team. The IAAF, still supportive of a U.S. hosted Championship, expedited the selection process in order to secure a U.S. location for 2021. The World Championships were not only coming to the United States, they were coming to Oregon, track and field's national home.

The 1962 Seattle World's Fair forever changed the economic and cultural trajectory of a small town in the Puget Sound region. Analogously, the 2021 World Track and Field Championships offer the Willamette Valley a once-in-a-generation opportunity to not only lead the sport of track and field to a better place, but to leave a legacy for generations to come.

Could the World Championships serve as the catalyst for an integrated and revitalized EWEB, 5th Street, Downtown district? Perhaps innovative and lasting regional transportation and sustainability solutions can be developed? What if Hayward Field were to become the finest track and field specific facility in the world and thus the true global home for the sport that is so much a part of Oregon's societal fabric? What if Oregon were to reverse course and become the healthiest and fittest state in the union? These are not pie-in-the-sky imaginings but indeed truly achievable aspirations.

The World Track and Field Championships will be the largest sporting event in the world in 2021 and consequently represents the Willamette Valley's greatest generational opportunity to turn such aspirations into reality and to set an intentional course for the economic and cultural future of the region. The possibilities are limitless if we come together and purposely choose to make this our World's Fair moment.

In conclusion, I ask you to please vote Yes on HB 4146.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Greg Erwin
Principal and CEO Sapien Private Wealth Management
Board Member Track Town USA