



February 8, 2018

Rep. Paul Holvey
Chair: Business and Labor Committee
House Committee on Business and Labor
900 Court Street NE, H-277
Salem, Oregon 97301

Chair Holvey and Members of the Business and Labor Committee:

On behalf of Washington County, I am writing to express support for House Bill 4093, which clarifies that amateur athletes that play for a junior hockey league team are not employees when playing for the team.

The Portland Winterhawks have been part of Oregon and southwest Washington since 1951. The Winterhawks have provided a rich history of success and identity within our part of the Northwest and have been an important part of the Western Hockey League (WHL) in which they have long belonged. They represent the best amateur hockey available to Oregon and southwest Washington, and their presence here is one of the leading factors in our region being able to keep a few ice rinks and facilities open. Washington County is interested in preserving a future for the "Hawks" to stay where they are and encourages them to help increase participation by our residents in ice sports. Their WHL games are played in Portland, but their presence can be felt across our region for anyone who enjoys hockey, or connected to the communities where the members of the Winterhawks team live and go to school.

Washington County is also interested in the potential for developing what will be a premier ice facility in Washington County working with lead partners that include Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation District (THPRD), Washington County Visitors Association and yes, the Portland Winterhawks organization. The Winterhawks are currently discussing funding for a premier ice facility with the above-named parties and others. This project will be comparable in impact, economic activity and sports development to the 1st rate soccer facility and academy in Beaverton that includes a THPRD partnership with the Portland Timbers, Adidas, and many others. We are very excited with the prospects of a facility that will not only provide for Winterhawks practices, but also will introduce hockey, ice skating and other ice sports to communities around Oregon and southwest Washington. Our region is severely limited by the few ice skating facilities available now for ice sport programming..

We expect that the facility will create a tremendous value for community use in our increasingly diverse region and greatly increase tournament tourism from across the entire northwest (including teams from Lane County, a place with a significant number of amateur hockey teams) in Washington County. Right now youth hockey must travel to the SF Bay Area or points well north of Seattle to play meaningful tournament games. The Winterhawks want to encourage the growth of hockey and other ice sports in the USA. The organization is aware that involving users from across the demographic spectrum is critical to ice sport growth. Their emerging plan for a Washington County facility includes programming

Board of County Commissioners

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designed to be accessible to all members of our community. Programs, such as skate school for beginners, family skate time, adult skate, and for school groups, are anticipated to be coupled with free ice times, discounts and scholarships so as to be within reach of everyone.



Dick Schouten

Washington County Commissioner and President of the Tualatin Hills Park Foundation

Cc: Washington County Board of Commissioners

Robert Davis

Jonathan Schlueter

James McCauley

Doug Menke, THPRD General Manager