



February 26, 20018

**Before the
Senate Committee on Workforce**

In support of HB 4093A

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On behalf of the Washington County Board of Commissioners I want express our support for HB 4093.

As you may know the Portland Winterhawks have been part of Portland and Oregon sport's fixture for over 40 years when they relocated from Edmonton. It's been a rich history and provided the region and State access to the finest amateur hockey in the western US.

The Winterhawks play their games in Portland, but impact in the community extends across the region with players who stay with families and the hundreds of employees and support services that maintain the games and practices.

Washington County is interested in a future that keeps the Winterhawks in Oregon. The Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation District (THPRD) and the Washington County Visitor Association are in talks with the Winterhawks to build a premier ice facility in the County.

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 and many others.

HB 4093 seeks to clarify elements in labor law in order to keep the Winterhawks in Oregon. Without this clarity the Winterhawks have made it clear they will leave for Washington State or a Canadian Province, which has the clarity necessary to continue as an amateur hockey franchise.

Today you have an opportunity to do what been done in many Canadian Provinces, Washington State, and Michigan, provide clarity in the amateur athlete statute.

By supporting HB 4093 the Metro region and Oregon residents will have a front seat to this training facility. The benefit for the facility is not just the Winterhawks team, but also adding "ice time" for many youth and high school teams who are challenged by a lack of ice for a sport with a growing following.

As a youth coach of several sports over the years I am all too familiar with the difficulty in finding time for any number of sports. Hockey has perhaps the most difficult time, because there are only two ice rinks available in the Portland region. With the facility as envisioned by THPRD and the Winterhawks, available ice will double with 2 side by side rinks at the Winterhawks facility.

We hope you can join Washington County and many others and support HB 4093.