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# A STRONG VOICE FOR OREGON'S WORKERS

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**TO:** Chair Barker  
Vice-Chairs Bynum and Barreto  
Members of the House Committee on Business and Labor

**FR:** Graham Trainor, President  
Oregon AFL-CIO

**RE:** Oregon Labor Support for Bringing Major League Baseball to Oregon

February 24, 2020

Good morning, Chair Barker, Vice-Chairs Bynum and Barreto, and members of the committee. My name is Graham Trainor and I am the President of the Oregon AFL-CIO, the statewide federation of labor unions representing over 300,000 workers. It's an honor to be before you again this morning to share our perspective on the work of the Portland Diamond Project and the exciting effort to bring Major League Baseball to Oregon.

Let me first just say that as a short-lived and opportunistic Washington Nationals fan achieved while my wife spent a year and a half in DC for work recently, my excitement about what we're here to talk about today has nothing to do with currently being on the winning team. But it doesn't hurt.

When workers and their unions think about new development, whether it's a private or public project, and regardless of whether it's a sports stadium, hotel, or a supermarket, we look at what the long-term gains for workers and their communities will be. We aren't just using a "build baby build" lens without a broader analysis of the types of impacts a project will have. Is a developer looking to turn a quick profit, cut corners, and minimize labor costs regardless of the quality of the work done on the project? Or are they looking to be a partner, a partner that will embody a value of creating GOOD, family supporting jobs throughout the life cycle of the development, and ensure their project will benefit the broader community?

As we started to engage with the Portland Diamond Project to better understand their goals and values, we quickly realized that their vision for bringing Major League Baseball to Oregon had the makings of an incredible partnership.

After months of conversations about PDP's commitment to ensuring that their vision for development kept working Oregonians front and center, they agreed in July of last year to be the first and only unionized sports arena in Oregon, and they did so earlier in the development process than perhaps any other sports arena in the nation. Their commitment to ensuring job creation was done in a way that will truly create shared prosperity for the community was on full display then...and it continues to be on full display today.

Let's just take a quick look at what this type of development can mean for the state's economy. In addition to the thousands of construction jobs, this project will also create several thousand jobs inside the stadium. Many of these types of stadium jobs are traditionally low-wage, no-benefit seasonal jobs. However, thanks to this

partnership, a future Oregon ballpark will take a different approach by giving workers a fair process to choose to be represented by a union if they'd like. And by extension, these workers will have an opportunity to bargain over working conditions, wages and benefits, pushing upward on the standard of many of these jobs once the stadium is built.

As this partnership between Labor and the Portland Diamond Project has matured, we have gotten more and more excited about its prospects, like so many Oregon baseball fans. When development and planning are done the Portland Diamond Project way, everyone wins.

Most importantly, I am very willing to reevaluate my fickle baseball allegiances when we bring Major League Baseball to Oregon. And thanks to the Portland Diamond Project's values and approach, we are well positioned to make Oregon and its working families better off with baseball.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on this exciting project, and I'm looking forward to opening day.