

Ed Willson
85 W36th Ave
Eugene, OR 97405

Joint Subcommittee on Capital Construction

2/15/24

Dear Co-Chair Holvey, Co-Chair Girod, and Members of the Committee,

The Lane County Fairgrounds and the Eugene Emeralds are the cornerstones for summertime entertainment that brings urban and rural Lane County residents together as a community. Both organizations are facing tough decisions that will greatly impact their relevance as community treasurers.

Major League Baseball has told the Emeralds that if they don't build a stadium to their standards by 2024, the team will be moved to another community or cease to exist at all, resulting in lost jobs, local vendor revenue, and entertainment options.

The continued budget drain to maintain the aging buildings and infrastructure at the Lane County Fairgrounds has been well-documented and reported. In its current condition, the Fairgrounds will continue to struggle to maximize the opportunities to provide the year-round entertainment and employment that county residents want and expect from a public venue.

There is a solution. The Emeralds ownership is proposing a public-private partnership that breathes new life into an aging Lane County Fairgrounds and opens new opportunities for year-round entertainment and community uses. Team ownership is prepared invest to support Lane County to build a multi-use facility that will be home to the Emeralds and serve as a venue for youth baseball and softball, tournaments, concerts, meetings, and other events that attracts locals and brings people to the Eugene-Springfield area from the region throughout the year.

I am asking for your support of a Lane County-Eugene Emeralds public-private partnership to plan and build a multi-use facility that significantly updates the Lane County Fairgrounds, keeps the Eugene-Emeralds the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area, and provides revenue generating events year round.

Thank you for your careful consideration.

Sincerely,

Ed Willson