

Dear Co-Chair Holvey, Co-Chair Girod and members of the committee:

I am writing to you to support HB 5201 in support of the new baseball stadium at the Fair Grounds in Eugene. This can be a very controversial subject, as I wish to support for the stadium project.

The Eugene Emeralds bring in about \$100 million in revenue to Lane County each year. Money that will be easily replaced if the team were to be relocated. The team charitable works go far beyond almost organization for which I know and this cannot be easily replaced.

The Lane County fairgrounds are in desperate need of upgrading. In the past thirty years I've seen the fairgrounds deteriorate from healthy to disrepair. This project would help make vital repairs and would make the fairgrounds much more viable than it is presently and not just for baseball fans but for others who could come to this multi-use stadium and the other parts of the fairgrounds. The fairgrounds are in a location which is not doing very well and the extra revenue from the stadium would do much to improve the neighborhood and help employment for many people.

The cold reality that funding this measure can be controversial. You will hear people talk about public money for a private business. When you consider the money that the Emeralds have put into this project (and other business will be heavily included) make this a true public/private venture. This is not the typical public/private venture where the public pays 90%. The short term upfront money would result in a long term gain that would more make up for the initial investment, including the tax payer. The Emeralds are not asking for a billion dollars to fund a major league team that could leave in five years thanks to low attendance. They will be around generations to come like that have been generations in the past.

I urge your support of this measure.

-Michael Richardson
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