

Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue March 31st
Senator Meek
Vice-chairs MacClain and Paterson

For the record my name is Josie Koehne and I live in Washington County.

I can't believe that you are considering SB 110 when so many Oregonians are in dire need of affordable housing, veterans are in fear of losing their benefits, seniors are worried about social security, the medically needy might lose their health care, and the food banks have seen funding cuts.

A commitment of \$800 million – without interest - would be an average of \$53 million a biennium for 30 years. With interest it could be double that amount.

There is no other cultural facility in this state that the legislature provides that kind of biennial revenue. The High Desert Museum, nope. The Shakespeare Festival, nope. The Trailblazers, nope. The Historical Society, nope.

Perhaps you are seeing this as a cultural subsidy, not an economic development move, as academic research continues to say a stadium subsidy is good for its owners, but not communities.

Brookings Institution's Ted Gayer, co-author of an extensive and detailed analysis of this issue says:

"Studies consistently find no discernible positive relationship between sports facility construction and local economic development, income growth, or job creation."

The city will get parking revenue, TriMet will sell tickets. The transportation system will get traffic. Some restaurants and hotels will see some bookings for the games.

And Most game attendees will eat hotdogs inside the stadium, that's part of the experience itself. But beyond that, there's not much income for the local community once the facility is built. Any games are at least six years away.

With 32,000 seats, how many be filled by visitors?

Portland wants dollars for a new Keller Auditorium, the James Beard Market, revitalizing both the Lloyd Center district and the OMSI district, extending the streetcar to Montgomery Park, and likely soon a re-do of the 30-year-old Moda Center. If the state helps fund an MLB stadium that not many Oregonians can get to or afford, will these other projects lose out?

It's time to question both Oregon's priorities and the Diamond Project numbers.

Meanwhile, your constituents are worried about real life considerations. Please put this extremely expensive project aside and Ask yourselves instead, what will you do when federal funds are gone and a recession hits?