



May 8, 2025

Good Afternoon Co-Chairs and Committee Members,

My name is Allan Benavides, and I've had the privilege of serving as the General Manager of the Eugene Emeralds for the past 16 years. I'm here not just as someone who has lived and breathed Minor League Baseball, but as someone who believes deeply in the power of this game to transform communities. I come to you today with urgency—and with hope.

As many of you know, our time in Eugene is coming to an end—not by choice, but by circumstance. Despite years of effort, including a committed partnership with Lane County and significant private investment, we were unable to secure the final public dollars needed to build a facility that meets Major League Baseball's new standards. Without that, we lose our team.

But this is not a eulogy—it's a call to action. Because we have an opportunity. A rare one.

That opportunity is Medford, Oregon.

Medford is an underserved, fast-growing community with a rich baseball tradition. It's home to a passionate fan base, civic leaders who are engaged, and a location that fills a geographic and economic gap for Minor League Baseball in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. They want professional baseball. And they're ready for it.

We've sat down with city leaders, community members, and regional partners. The message is clear: Medford wants this. And with your support, we can bring this team—and everything it brings with it—to Southern Oregon.

What they need now is your partnership.

We're not asking for a handout. We're asking for an investment.

We're talking about:

- Dozens of full-time and hundreds of seasonal jobs.
- An economic anchor supporting hotels, restaurants, and small businesses.
- A stadium that hosts not just baseball, but youth sports, community events, and yes—even concerts.
- A place where families, fans, and future athletes can gather and grow.
- And a multi-use facility which will enhance community pride in southern Oregon

Baseball is often called America's pastime. But in places like Medford, it's more than that. It's a bridge—between generations, across neighborhoods, and between small towns and the national stage.

We are not the only affiliated Minor League team in Oregon—but if we lose this opportunity, we will be the first to go dark under MLB's new facility standards.

Let's not let that happen.

Let's build something lasting in Medford. Let's give this region—and this historic team—the shot it deserves.

Thank you for your time and your consideration,

Allan Benavides

General Manager, Eugene Emeralds

Eugene Emeralds Baseball Club



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