

Submitter: Gavon Gardner
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1501

To the Committee,

I am asking you to support SB 1501.

The Portland Trail Blazers are not just a tenant in a building. They are woven into the identity of this state. For over 50 years, this team has been part of family traditions, childhood memories, and community pride across Oregon.

I grew up watching games with family and friends. I have seen strangers high-five each other in grocery stores the morning after a big win. I have seen packed living rooms during playoff runs. The Blazers give this state something to rally around together. In a time when our country feels divided, that kind of unity is rare and valuable.

Portland is not a mega-market city. We do not have multiple NBA franchises. We do not have endless professional teams competing for attention. The Trail Blazers are Oregon's only NBA team. When they take the floor, they represent our entire state on a national stage.

If we lose them, it will not just be about basketball. It will be about losing a piece of who we are.

SB 1501 represents stability. It represents a long-term commitment to keeping the Moda Center viable and competitive. Modern arenas are a major factor in whether professional franchises stay in smaller markets. Other cities would line up immediately to offer incentives and new facilities if given the opportunity.

We cannot assume loyalty alone will protect us.

There are also real economic consequences. Thousands of jobs are tied directly and indirectly to the arena. Local restaurants, bars, hotels, parking services, and small businesses depend on game nights. Downtown Portland needs consistent energy and foot traffic. The Blazers provide that more than 40 nights a year, plus playoffs and concerts.

But beyond economics, this is about generational continuity. Kids in Oregon deserve to grow up with the same team their parents grew up cheering for. They deserve to

dream about playing on that floor. They deserve to feel pride when they see "Portland" across a jersey.

Once a franchise leaves, it does not come back easily. Other cities can promise money. They cannot replicate 50 years of shared history.

Please do not let future Oregonians look back and say that we had the opportunity to protect this team and failed to act.

Support SB 1501. Keep the Portland Trail Blazers where they belong.

Sincerely,
A proud Oregon resident