



To whom it may concern:

My name is Dr. Tommy Bacher. I am the President of Maccabi Canada which is a nonprofit, national, athletic organization that promotes healthy lifestyles among our participants. I understand that there is a group who are bidding to bring the World Masters Athletics Championships to Toronto in 2020. I fully support this initiative. Let me tell you a bit about what we do at Maccabi Canada.

We have sports days in schools where our athletes discuss the values of being active and stress the important qualities that being involved in sport will promote. Our athletes range in age from 14-85 and many of those who give back to the kids during these days in schools are our masters' athletes.

A small part of what we do is to have teams compete in various worldwide games every 2 years with the highlight being the Maccabiah Games in Israel every 4 years. These are the 3rd largest Olympic style Games in the world and are for Jewish athletes, many of whom compete in the masters category. In fact the number of our older athletes has grown in the last few games and is now about 20% of our over 500 athletes who compete.

The benefits to having masters aged athletes compete are many. For the athlete themselves it provides a platform for them to get into and stay in top shape, to be "the best they can be". As a physician I am always encouraging my older patients to stay fit as a means of staying healthy and enjoying life to the fullest. Masters athletes are critical as well as role models. They inspire others both young and old to start or continue to participate in sport and this act of being role models cannot be underestimated.

In a city such as Toronto where the percentage of our older population is growing, and with such a diverse community, sport is critical to bringing everyone together and is definitely a big factor in making Toronto a very tolerant community towards all groups and is one reason why we are always high on the list of best cities to live.

Having the Championships here in 2020 will truly be special for our community and will serve to promote the value of sport to all, young and old. From those many who will be helping with the Games, to those watching, to those competing, there will be a positive benefit to all and this will extend to beyond the Games, as to quote Nelson Mandela, "Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does"

Again I strongly support the bid to bring the 2020 World Masters Athletics Championships to Toronto!

Sincerely,

Tommy Bacher
President, Maccabi Canada