

I am writing in support of HB 3376 (Relating to movie theaters; declaring an emergency). Movie theaters throughout Oregon have had to remain closed for nearly a year. As a result, they have lost all or nearly all of their revenue for that period. Theaters, particularly the small, independent ones, desperately need financial assistance to survive.

Independent theaters, such as Salem Cinema in the capital, are valuable cultural resources for the community. They offer films that the larger theaters, owned by national corporations, will never show. The movies the independent theaters show attract people from well outside the community — people who also spend their money in local restaurants and other businesses. These theaters can act as an important catalyst for the economic development of local neighborhoods. They provide important entry level jobs. Movie theaters are utilized by a very broad range of people in the community — from rich to poor, from young children to senior citizens. Given the type of films they often show, the independent theaters, in particular, frequently attract senior citizens. The theaters are viewed as safe and accessible places to visit with friends and family. Theaters also provide a venue for shared cross-generational activity that cannot easily be duplicated.

Movie theaters are a critical component of the cultural, recreational and economic life of Oregon's communities. Please help them survive and thrive by supporting HB 3376.