

Ken and Jan Nolley  
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March 24, 2021

TO: House Committee in Economic Recovery and Prosperity

RE: HB 3376

Dear Chair Lively, Vice-Chair Cate, Vice-Chair Kropf and members of the Committee:

I have lived in Oregon for 54 years. I taught at Willamette University for 47 of those years. I started to teach courses in film studies in 1972 and eventually I started a major in film in the curriculum there. Films have been an important part of my personal and professional life for many decades.

I first became seriously interested in film as an undergraduate in college in Santa Barbara. If it had not been for the programming offered by the local independent venue there—the Riviera Theater--I would not have discovered the magic of international cinema. When I was in graduate school and during the early years of my teaching, everything had to be seen on a movie screen, and I am deeply grateful for the offerings of the old Hollywood Theater in Salem, several small theaters in Eugene, Cinema 21 and the Hollywood Theater in Portland, and many more. In the years after the Hollywood Theater in Salem was razed, Salem Cinema became a vital part of my life and the life of the community.

Still today, even with streaming easily available, the large screens and shared space of independent movie theaters play a critical role in Oregon communities, allowing people to come together and share the experience of the best and most satisfying new films. We often meet to eat together before a screening, and many screenings are followed by animated discussions over coffee or drinks in local venues. Simply put, independent theaters are a critical part of the cultural life of our Oregon communities.

You will have heard from theater owners about the enormous challenges they have faced in trying to keep afloat until we can be together in public again. I am here to say that the communities they serve need them to survive as well.

Please support this bill. It is critical to the life of these vital local institutions.

Sincerely,



Ken Nolley  
Professor Emeritus of English and Film Studies  
Willamette University