

We are writing in support of HB 3376. The past year has put incredible economic hardships on small businesses, especially those that are entertainment-related. My family owns restaurants in Salem and would be dead in the water if it weren't for the ongoing support of our community PLUS all the assistance we could get our hands on.

It has been terribly stressful and there were times when we thought we'd have to permanently close. We would hate to see Salem Cinema, and other small theaters like them, die as a consequence of COVID-19.

Cinemas and theaters are essential to the vitality of every community. These are public places that encourage everything from escape to expansion, and Salem Cinema in particular has 39 years of bringing entertainment (including live music, theatrical performances, live-action versions of cult movies, directors/filmmakers discussions, etc.) to our community. It is virtually impossible to quantify the value theaters like Salem Cinema has in our community and the reach beyond Salem. I know of several movies where people journeyed from other cities just to come to Salem Cinema because it was an exclusive showing.

This is an organic network. A feedback loop. As much as any small business is vital, when we start to lose footing due to closures of retail, restaurants, gyms, theaters, yoga studios, the ENTIRE network suffers. Support of HB 3376 (and similar assistance, hopefully there's more coming!) is a no-brainer. We have all had to humble ourselves and get creative with fund-raising this past year. Our government needs to continue to do the same.

Sincerely and humbly,

Leslie and Dino Venti

Owners of Venti's Restaurants, Salem, OR