

February 8, 2022

Representative John Lively, Chairman
House Committee on Economic Recovery and Prosperity
Salem, OR. 97301

RE: HB 4040

Dear Chairman Lively and Members of the Committee:

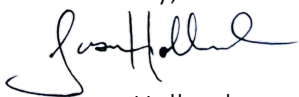
The reality of the prolonged pandemic is reframing both the importance of arts, culture, heritage and humanities, and the question of the very survival of our state's cultural assets. The funding the state and federal government has allocated in the past has been the *lifeline* that has sustained our critical infrastructure to date. Oregon Coast Council for the Arts was grateful to receive badly needed support from PPP loans, Cares Act and our community – thank you! The sector is still extremely fragile, however, with over 70% of our colleagues reporting the crisis having a severe financial impact which has brought closures, layoffs, furloughs, and other cost-savings measures across the state.

Here at the Newport Performing Arts Center and Newport Visual Arts Center, we have experienced a dramatic decline in the number of events and performances we are able to offer our communities – a 78% drop compared to pre-COVID numbers. These events not only bring in badly needed revenues to our arts non-profits, they support workers in creative industries; artists, technicians, box office staff, etc. And they bring patrons to local restaurants and shops where they spend money in our small neighborhood businesses. All of that activity has nearly come to a halt even to this day. For our organization alone, that's a 72% drop in revenues compared to when the pandemic hit.

Creativity is and will be critical for the health and recovery of all Oregonians. The neighboring communities that arts organizations like ours serve can be the ultimate collaborators during challenging times. With this critically needed infusion of support, organizations have an opportunity to create safe experiences that delight communities and meet their diverse needs.

I respectfully ask for your vote to pass HB #4040 which will invest \$50 million dollars in the stability and recovery of Oregon's vital arts and culture sector.

Sincerely,



Jason Holland

Executive Director,

Oregon Coast Council for the Arts