

From: :Chris Guntermann cguntermann@hotmail.com 971-409-0934

President; Baker Cabin Historical Society 501(3)c ; Oregon City www.bakercabin.org

RE: HB 4040 Feb 09, 2022

Dear Representatives and Committee :

The Baker's Cabin Historic site and museum is situated along the Oregon Trail, with a Mission Statement to Preserve and Maintain the 1856 Pioneer Baker's log cabin, and the 1895 Pioneer Church for community use and education. The Bakers arrived with the 1846 Barlow Road wagon train.

The Society heartily supports the basic idea behind the HB 4040, which would provide bridge funding assistance until things stabilize

The pandemic has accelerated our Society's financial shortfalls. Our small Society has been barely hanging on for years as it tries to maintain the two buildings and the grounds for community use, education, and tourism. Operation hours and site maintenance are 90% done by volunteers, and 42% of operation dollars come from donations. Many of our volunteers are elderly. Without help in maintaining the site, the community loses its historic site and the county and state lose much more.

Think of successful historic areas you may have visited.. Rome, Boston, Williamsburg, Philadelphia, Concord & Lexington, etc. ALL of those heritage sites receive considerable and *sustained* public support, otherwise they would long ago also have turned to dust. Do you think the Minutemen history was important? Yes. Just as are the Oregon Pioneers; and we here should receive the same support.

However, it is very important to note, and perhaps thus Amend the Bill, that there should be separate categories between For-Profit businesses (mostly arts), and Non-Profit (mostly heritage) because non-profits should not have to compete for the same pot of money. Why? well it is because the needs and businesses are so different, and even if a small non-profit wins a grant, it will be small due to the 'distribution percentage' effect compared to grants to the larger businesses.

OK you say, but what of it?

This is the key; when a musician or artist can't make money, they can go get a job at Walmart. And, someday become a musician again. When a music venue closes, one will re-open again as soon as a business model supports it. The musicians or artists will re-appear out of nowhere again to start right back up. New artists are created every day. While I do feel sorry for the venue owners now taking the loss, that is the expectation of business risk. They gamble on profiting, but lost instead..... the definition of Capitalism.

But, in the case of a heritage venues like the Historic 1856 log cabin site..... if the public lets it fail, if it is not maintained, it will rot to dust, and go "Extinct". Lost Forever to our community, and ***never again*** available as a tourist attraction. A State without a sense of history becomes soulless, especially a state like Oregon so rich with stories.

While we pledge support to HB4040 in the current form, we feel that it does not go as far as needed to protect the ever eroding, yet ever more important, lessons of the history that built this State, and brought the disparate peoples to Oregon to make a community.

Respectfully submitted:

Chris Guntermann