

January 26, 2023

Dear Reps. Bynum, Morgan, Nguyen, Diehl, Elmer, Javadi, Lively, Osborne, Pham, Ruiz and Walters of the House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business,

RE: HB 2459

It's the law of physics – an object already in motion takes less energy to stay in motion. But, an object at rest takes enormous energy to restore it to its former motion.

I think you see the analogy between the law of physics and the situation many Oregon arts organizations around the state find themselves in, when, by law, they had to close their doors during Covid. And now are struggling to find momentum again.

I ask for your support of HB 2459 which proposes \$50M to help start up again – put into motion – the heartbeat, the soul, and the livelihood of Oregon arts organizations and venues on the coast and across the state.

As retired executive director of the Oregon Coast Council of the Arts (OCCA) in Newport and manager of the Newport Performing Arts Center (PAC), I see on the PAC calendar, the reduced number of performances – because of the impact of Covid on the performers in the community.

In 2022 there was a **50% cancellation rate** on shows. Additionally, for our dance companies there has been the loss of over 24 months of instruction to younger dancers and thus, a crisis for the creation of performances that involve the entire company.

When I go to an event – I see the reduced number of audience members, many of whom are not ready to come back. In fact, at the PAC there has been a **decrease in attendance by 44%** from pre-pandemic levels.

Fewer performances and fewer audience members mean less ticket revenue. In fact, **20% less ticket revenue** for OCCA and the PAC than in pre-pandemic years. In addition, there is an **escalation of about 30% in the cost of doing business**, i.e. equipment, supplies and labor.

Let's put Oregon arts in motion again – momentum for our communities, for our local and statewide creative economy, and for our physical well-being.

Thank you for your support of HB 2459.

Catherine Rickbone
CACO Board Member
Executive Director Retired OCCA