



January 26, 2023

Representative John Lively  
900 Court Street NE, H-481  
Salem, OR. 97301

Re: HB 2459 – Supporting the Continued Restoration of the Arts and Culture Sector

Representative Lively,

As both a small business and a non-profit arts organization, Eugene Ballet is tirelessly working through these uncertain times with a continued commitment to serving our patrons, students, employees, and community.

Since March of 2020, our organization with many others across Oregon, have experienced some of the longest pandemic-related shutdowns. The initial impact over the closures left us scrambling to find ways to support our employees and artists, to maintain connections to our patrons and students, and above all to stay open.

With the early support of the CARES dollars we were able to restore employment for 90% of our pre-pandemic employees, however the restoration of our patron base and earned income is still lagging behind. Like other organizations in the arts and culture sector, we are forecasting a full five years before our attendance numbers are restored.

We still have daily reminders of the direct impact COVID-19 and the potential for cancellations has on our organization. This week, key members of our technical crew tested positive and were forced to shut down our scene shop with two weeks left before we move our upcoming production of *Petrushka* to the Hult Center here in Eugene. At the same time we are faced with the debilitating reality that ticket sales for this production are 58% of where they were just prior to the shutdowns in 2020.

Even if we forecast a 10% increase in attendance each year for the next four years, we are facing unsustainable losses to get to full recovery without assistance.

The funding proposed in HB 2459 will allow Eugene Ballet to continue operations in a manner that takes care of our employees and directly impact the local economy. It will allow us to maintain our ability to continue offering scholarships to our youth, ticket subsidies for those who are underserved, and diverse programming that strategically increases access to the arts for our entire community.

With your support of HB 2459 we can work together and continue to provide the critical culture, art and economic stimulus that is desperately needed throughout our community.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Sincerely,

Josh Neckels  
Executive Director  
541-485-3992

**Toni Pimble**  
Artistic Director

**Jennifer Martin**  
Associate Artistic Director

**Suzanne Haag**  
Resident Choreographer

**Sara Lombardi**  
Academy Director

**Josh Neckels**  
Executive Director

**Michael Syman-Degler**  
President

**Len Calvert**  
Vice President

**Jerril Nilson**  
Secretary

**Megan Horvath**  
Treasurer

**Alisa Caesar**

**Joan Cavan**

**Corynn Gilbert**

**Cynthia Hostetter**

**Bethan Jones**

**Susan Jones**

**Brick Lantz**

**Gary LeClair**

**Tommye Martinez**

**Monique Mulbry**

**Margaret Savoian**

**Jeanne Staton**

Directors

**Anne DeLaney**

**Rosaria Haugland**

**Sabrina Madison-Cannon**

Advisory Board

Midtown Arts Center  
174 East 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Eugene, OR 97401

541-485-3992  
eugeneballet.org