

The John G. Shedd Institute for the Arts

868 High Street, Eugene, OR 97401
PO Box 1497, Eugene, OR 97440-1497

Telephone: 541.434.7000
www.theshedd.org

January 30, 2023

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Executive Director
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Business Office
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& Cultural Services
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The Honorable Janelle Bynum
Chair, House Committee On Economic Development and Small Business
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE,
Salem Oregon 97301

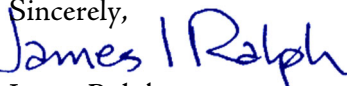
Dear Madam Chair:

I am writing this morning on behalf of my company, The John G. Shedd Institute for the Arts and with my colleagues in the cultural services sector, in strong support of House Bill 2459.

Your CRF support back in 2020 was absolutely essential to the survival of Oregon's cultural services sector. Without that support, paired with additional special support from Washington D. C., many of us would not have survived. But we are still not out of the woods: Because of my own company's unusually diverse range of services (and, thereby, a broad and resilient non-profit support base), The Shedd is managing for now...not brilliantly, but managing. Many of our colleagues are not, with almost weekly news of one colleague or another being in dire straits in the face of continued inflationary pressures and significantly lower audience counts (in our case an overall decrease of over 40%). Those of us who did a lot of work before the pandemic have been able to adjust (up to a point) to these market dynamics through downsizing and adjusting our service mix; it's not been easy and remains not easy, but we're doing it. Many smaller companies in our sector, however, didn't have that flexibility even in good times: for these, a further decrease in service delivery would put them very close to the edge of viability. All of us need the help that this bill would provide; some of us need it badly. I have never been a fan of too much reliance on government support, feeling that we should do our darnedest to carry our own load. But the conditions today, if not the same as they were back in 2020 when we first appealed to you for CRF support, are still really challenging...with little good news on the horizon.

Towards the end of our testimony back in 2020 to the CRF Work Group, Representative Lively asked us how we would survive after the funding we were asking for ran out. My reply then was that I wasn't sure, but that if we didn't get some help, I *was* sure many of us wouldn't make it. I would say the same is the case today.

Sincerely,



James Ralph
Executive Director
The John G. Shedd Institute for the Arts

*The mission of The Shedd Institute is to be an education and performance center
where people find and nurture community through discovery, creation and celebration.*