

January 31, 2023

House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business
Oregon House of Representatives
Salem, OR. 97301

RE: HB2459

Dear Chairwoman Bynum and Committee members:

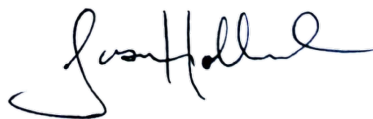
As you work to build an economic relief package further mitigating the devastating impacts of COVID-19 in our beloved state, **we ask that you make a critical investment of \$50 million in our creative sector to help our venues, our artists, our employees and cultural organizations to rebuild from the major impact that COVID has had on our sector.** Our survival will in turn leverage significant economic activity in communities like here in Newport and across the entire state of Oregon.

Here at the Newport Performing Arts Center and Newport Visual Arts Center, we are still seeing a 50% reduction in the number of events and performances we are able to offer our communities as compared to pre-COVID numbers. That translated to a 45% drop in earned revenues and attendance for 2022. We are also seeing a 30% increase in costs from materials to labor. Our events not only bring in badly needed revenues to our centers of community art, they go to support workers in creative support industries; artists, technicians, box office staff, etc. They also bring both local patrons and tourists into local restaurants, shops and hotels where they spend money in our neighborhood businesses.

Creativity is and will be critical for the health and recovery of all Oregonians. The 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 uplift communities and offer opportunities to heal and come together.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jason Holland
Executive Director,
Oregon Coast Council for the Arts