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February 11, 2023

The Honorable Dacia Grayber
Chair, House Committee on Emergency
Management, General Government and Veterans
Oregon State Legislature
Salem, Oregon. 97301

RE: HB 2498, Creation of the Cultural Impact Program

Dear Chair Grayber and Committee Members:

Thank you for scheduling HB 2498, a bill to create the Cultural Impact Program, for early consideration in the current legislative session. We believe that meeting the state's original promise to the Oregon Cultural Trust can happen in this session and we appreciate your taking the first steps.

The Oregon Cultural Trust is a unique-to-the nation vehicle for supporting over 1600 eligible nonprofits with grant funds to meet our shared mission of making sure every Oregonian has access to arts and culture in their community.

Oregonians have built a corpus of over \$30 million dollars using the tax credit generously provided by the state. There was to be an additional infusion of funds into the OCT however, and it was to come through the sale of public lands. No public land sale revenue has reached the OCT and today we are asking for that to be remedied by dedicating \$200 m. in lottery bond capacity to the Trust. These funds will be invested and the earnings granted out to eligible nonprofits to keep arts, culture, heritage and humanities alive.

We represent over 350 members across the state from individual artists to large organizations like the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, from tribal coalitions to historic properties, from traveling civics exhibits to place-based restorations. We know the power of creativity to build communities and collective understanding. We know the economic impacts that arts and culture bring to our state through tourism, event attendance and scholarly study. This sector has been among the hardest hit from the pandemic and recovery continues. The timing is ideal to undergird its continued return with this proposal.

Many thanks.

Sincerely,

J.S. May, Chairman, CACO

