



February 12, 2023

House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government and Veterans

Chair Rep. Dacia Grayber

Vice Chairs Rep. Rick Lewis and Rep. Thuy Tran

Members – Rep. Charlie Conrad, Rep. Maxine Dexter, Rep. Paul Evans, Rep. James Hieb

Re: House Bill 2498 — Delivered Via Email

Dear Chair Grayber, Vice Chairs Lewis and Tran, Members Conrad, Dexter, Evans, Hieb

I am writing in support of HB2498 which will create the Oregon Cultural Impact Program as part of the Oregon Cultural Trust. It directs the sale of \$200 million of lottery bonds and disperses the interest and earnings from those funds to 1,500+ cultural organizations across the state of Oregon. Based on State Treasurer's office investment history, it is reasonable to predict that about \$10 million per year will be made available to Oregon cultural organizations.

When the Oregon Cultural Trust was created 20 years ago, the proposal included sale of surplus public lands to create a fund of at least \$200 million, from which earnings would be used to support Oregon's cultural organizations. The surplus property sales never occurred, and the promise of significant ongoing financial support was never realized. The \$30 m. In the corpus today has come through the tax credit offered to Oregonians to help build donations. For all the reasons we know — the healing impacts of the creative sector, the economic impacts, the social justice impacts — Oregonian's need to see the original promise fulfilled. This session's lottery bonding capacity is at an historic high point, making this the right moment to complete this promise.

Cultural organizations have a huge impact on the livability of our state. This level of new investment would be a game changer and have important long-term implications. Thank you for your consideration and leadership. Please reach out if you have questions.

Sincerely,

*John S. May*

JS May

Executive Director, Artists Repertory Theatre

[jsmay@artistsrep.org](mailto:jsmay@artistsrep.org) | 503-807-6224 | 128 NW 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Portland OR 97209