



Oregon Public Broadcasting
7140 S Macadam Avenue Portland, OR 97219
503.244.9900 opb.org

February 14, 2023

Testimony to and in reference to:

House Committee on Economic Development

RE: HB 2498, Oregon Cultural Trust (Creates Cultural Impact Program)

Dear Committee Members,

On behalf of the board and staff of Oregon Public Broadcasting, I strongly endorse creating the Oregon Cultural Impact Program as part of the Oregon Cultural Trust. House Bill 2498 directs the sale of \$200 million of lottery bonds, with the interest and earnings from those funds going to support the work of cultural organizations across Oregon.

By dedicating \$200 million in lottery bonding capacity to the corpus of the Oregon Cultural Trust, this bill fulfills the promise the Oregon Legislature made when the Trust was established. This support would come at a critical time for the struggling arts and culture sector in our state.

From our work covering the arts and culture sector in Oregon, we know the struggles facing organizations and artists working in these fields. Audiences have yet to return to anywhere near their pre-pandemic levels. Yet even as earned revenue has declined, costs of operations have risen across the board. This bill will help right the ship for organizations that make our state a wonderful place to work, live, and travel.

Like so many organizations in Oregon, OPB is able to connect millions of people to the arts and culture of our state thanks to funding provided by the Oregon Cultural Trust. Over the past 20 years, the Oregon Cultural Trust has provided hundreds of thousands of dollars in support of our award-winning history documentary series *Oregon Experience*, as well as our showcase to the creativity found all around our state, *Oregon Art Beat*.

Thank you for carefully considering this important bill, and helping to support a strong recovery of the arts and culture sector in Oregon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven M. Bass". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steven M. Bass
OPB President and CEO