

February 14, 2023

Dear Committee Members,

I appreciate your consideration of HB2498 to create the Cultural Impact program. You happen to be reviewing this proposal on Oregon's birthday. While not a native Oregonian, I have called it home for nearly 15 years. One of the things that drew me to this state was its reputation as a place that valued and appreciated arts and culture.

As I started to work in the arts and culture field, I learned more about some of the innovative ways Oregon had built support of the arts at the state level. The Oregon Arts Commission and the Oregon Cultural Trust provide the small nonprofit I run instrumental funding as well as meaningful connections to arts leaders around the state.

While the Trust and the Commission do the best work they can with the resources they have, if they were brought to their full power, there would be positive ripple effects across the state. I recently found out that Oregon is ranked 36th in the amount of arts support from the state per person. This bill will take steps to change this story.

I appreciate your consideration of House Bill 2489, which will bring the Cultural to it originally planned funding levels and uplift arts & culture for years to come.

Sincerely,

Kelly Johnson
Executive Director

