

The Honorable Janelle Bynum
Chair, House Committee on Economic Development
and Small Business
Oregon State Legislature
Salem, Oregon. 97301

RE: HB 3532, Trust for Cultural Development Administrative Cap Change

Dear Chair Bynum and Committee Members:

We are Brian Vegter and Ginger Savage, and we volunteer for the Baker County Cultural Coalition. We are writing to you today in support of HB 3532, a revenue neutral bill to change the administrative spending cap of the Trust for Cultural Development (dba The Oregon Cultural Trust – OCT). Our County Cultural Coalition supports this bill which will enable the Trust to better serve grantees through deeper organizational capacity.

The Oregon Cultural Trust is a unique-to-the nation vehicle for supporting over 1500+ 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. The original administrative cap of \$400,000 needs to be modernized to keep pace with the current demands and needs of Oregon's cultural organizations, the 45 county and tribal coalitions, and the five statewide agency partners currently supported. HB 3532 is a revenue neutral policy change that will exponentially increase our collective capacity to serve our cultural community.

Baker County, serving rural high poverty Baker County, Oregon has consistently used our coalition funding to increase engagement in the arts in our community. Successful projects from the past have included funding for low price teen tickets, support of costume expense for our community theatre, art supplies for the community chalk art project, investment in our museums and so much more.

We in Baker County 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. Not only do we need more public financial support, but we need to update our tools and support our dedicated volunteer networks to serve the sector at this critical time.

On behalf of Baker County Cultural Coalition, we strongly urge your support for HB 3532. Thank you for the opportunity to hear directly from the field about the important work of the Oregon Cultural Trust.

Brian Vegter, Co- Owner Churchill Baker LLC, Chair Baker County Cultural Coalition
Ginger Savage, Executive Director Crossroads Carnegie Art Center, Member BCCC