

Dear Chair Bynum and Committee Members:

My name is Serena Smith and I am a volunteer for the Wasco County Cultural Trust Coalition.

This year we awarded a grant to the Fort Dalles Museum in The Dalles for a project to transcribe their historical minutes, grants to bring musical and drama events to our area, as well as supporting a significant art installation that will be located in Maupin. These are small but significant projects that might not happen without the support of the Oregon Cultural Trust.

The Dalles Art Center is at the center of our art community here in Wasco County, and because of the pandemic it is in crisis and having to restructure in order to continue, or close. As a result of the pandemic, we now have only one theater group in the area and our hope is to be able to encourage new groups to form with the opportunities afforded by the grant funding we can offer.

We in Wasco 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 the Wasco County Cultural Trust 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.

Serena Smith