



Artists Repertory Theatre

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February 4, 2024

Oregon Legislature
House Committee on Economic Development & Small Business
Salem, Oregon

Dear Chair Bynum and Committee Members,

On behalf of Artists Repertory Theatre (ART), Portland's oldest professional theatre, we respectfully ask for your vote to pass **HB 4124** which will provide funding for 14 critically needed Capital projects for a diverse group of arts and culture organizations around the state. It is important to note that ART received capital funding in the 2021 session, and that funding has been critical to enable our return to our theatrical home. The State's \$2 million in support helped leverage an additional \$10 million in private support.

The Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon has managed this process since 2013. They extensively research and then recommend capital projects to the Legislature that have demonstrated local support, impact their communities and the artistic ecosystem of Oregon. In the 2023 session, two Portland Metro projects in a single district were funded, the remaining 14 projects, totaling \$7.8 million, were not, in what appeared to be an oversight. We believe that these remaining projects from all over the state truly merit your support.

Additionally, **HB 4124**, includes resiliency funding for the nonprofit arts and culture Sector. Federal Funding helped keep us alive through the pandemic, but audiences have been slow to return. We understand that the Legislature faces many huge problems, but for a relatively small investment, you can actually solve a problem and help arts and culture organizations thrive across the state. In the last session, the Legislature funded live venues, that were largely for-profit organizations, again, in what appeared to be an oversight. Without this funding, the challenges facing the sector are large and some organizations, including ART, are struggling. It would be a shame to have survived the pandemic, returned to our revitalized building, and then not survive.

We deeply appreciate your understanding the unique complexities and challenges of our sector and the significant impact on our local and statewide economy. **We urge your support for HB 4124.**

Thank you for your consideration.

JS May
Artists Repertory Theatre
President, Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon



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