



THE OREGON
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
FOUNDED 1898

February 6, 2024

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

Dear Chair Bynum and Committee Members,

I am writing today to respectfully urge your vote for HB 4124. As a staff member at the Oregon Historical Society and a board member for the Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon, I see firsthand how the success of Oregon's arts and culture organizations positively impacts our communities. HB 4124 provides crucial funding for these organizations.

In 2023, the Oregon Legislature funded only two of 16 recommended Cultural Resources Economic Fund (CREF) projects. It was the first time in a decade the full slate of projects had not been funded and it greatly impacted Oregon's arts and culture network. HB 4124 would fund the other 14 transformative projects at arts and culture organizations across the state. Projects include acquiring a permanent space for arts and culture programs in John Day, expanding the Oregon Film Museum in Clatsop County, and building a new home to shelter and house Black and BIPOC artists in North Portland. In addition, HB 4124 provides resiliency funding, distributed through grants managed by Business Oregon.

With its passage, HB 4124 will not only support fourteen organizations with specific projects, it will also improve livability and generate economic development and resiliency in the state. The arts and culture sector generated \$9.3 billion in state economic activity and employed 62,725 people in 2021. And, in polarized times, arts and culture are critical in bringing people together regardless of their backgrounds.

We hope you will agree that the arts and culture sector is an important part of why we love Oregon, and **urge you to vote for HB 4124** to support it and our communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nicole Yasuhara
Deputy Museum Director, Oregon Historical Society
Board Member, Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon