



# PHAME

*Creating art. Expanding possibility.*



*Artwork by Katie Carlsen.*

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

February 7, 2024

Dear Chair Bynum and Committee Members,

I am writing to ask for your support and advocacy for HB4124, which includes support for arts and culture organizations across the State of Oregon and funding for the current CACO CREF slate. PHAME Academy contributes greatly to and draws strength from the arts ecosystem, locally and state-wide, and this bill would lift all of us up as we continue to recover from the economic instability caused by the pandemic.

PHAME Academy is a 40-year-old non-profit arts and education organization for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Portland, Oregon. We offer classes, workshops, performance opportunities and community-building events to a highly marginalized population often left out of the conversation. Our work is not just focused on what happens inside the walls of our school, but also on the thriving partnerships we have built with large and small arts organizations across our region who want to open their doors to more people with disabilities.

During the pandemic, while we ourselves were scrambling to keep our program open, we watched as many of our performing arts partners were the first to close, the last to reopen, and were struggling to keep their artists employed and their stages active. At PHAME, our programs were deeply affected by these economic struggles in the local arts community, and even now in 2024, opportunities for our students, partners and colleagues are still limited. HB4124 would provide resiliency funding to many arts organizations that are still working to bring audiences back – audiences that also serve as an economic driver for so many businesses in our region. Because local arts organizations are some of our most important storytellers, increased funding for the arts would also ensure that more stories are told that represent the full spectrum of human experience, including stories about disability.

HB4124 also would provide funding for the 14 CREF capital projects recommended by the Cultural Advocacy Coalition that were not funded in the 2023 session, through what we believe was an oversight. These capital projects are from a diverse group of arts and culture organizations from around the state. They have been extensively vetted by the Cultural

Advocacy Coalition and all have significant local support. The organizations putting forward these projects are leaders in our local artistic and cultural ecosystem, and their projects are exciting and will truly be vital additions to our communities.

We are grateful to you for considering how the work of Oregon's artists and arts organizations continue to contribute to the recovery of our local economies and to the diversity and vibrancy of our state. We urge your support of HB4124.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, consisting of a long horizontal stroke with a loop and a vertical stroke crossing it.

Jenny R. Stadler, Ph.D.  
Executive Director, PHAME Academy  
Board Member, Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon