

Representative Nguyen, Chair and Representatives Diehl and Isadore, Vice-Chairs
House Committee on Economic Development, Small Business and Trade
Oregon Legislature Salem, Oregon 97301
RE: HB 3189, HB 3191

February 12, 2025

Dear Chair Nguyen, Vice Chairs Diehl and Isadore, and Committee Members,

Thank you in advance for making time to hear from leaders of humanities, arts, and heritage organizations on February 17, 2025. I am writing in my role as executive director of Oregon Humanities and board member of the Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon to communicate my enthusiastic support for **HB 3189 and HB 3191**. My hope is that you will recognize the importance of these bills and support them.

House Bill 3189 raises the grants budget of the Oregon Arts Commission to \$10 million which represents a doubling of available funds to be distributed to arts and culture providers across the state. For 17 years, Oregon's arts funding has stayed relatively flat, and this funding increase will help move Oregon in the top half of the fifty states in terms of state support from our current standing of 39th. The arts and culture sector \$829 million into Oregon's economy each year, attracting 8.9 million attendees to live events. This is a critical need for strengthening the cultural landscape of our state and quite simply, represents an investment in every Oregonian. The maximum grant from these funds is currently \$25,000.

House Bill 3191 presents 14 cultural projects for capital investment through the Cultural Resources Economic Funds (CREF) for a total amount of \$9.3 million. After a statewide call for proposals, these projects were carefully vetted by a peer review committee including experts from the Oregon Arts Commission and the Oregon Cultural Trust. This list of projects reflects those that are most ready for state investment: they have long-term access to their land, have obtained the necessary permits and approvals for their projects, and have raised other funds outside of state dollars. The legislature has funded the CREF capital slate since 2013 assisting over 40 organizations – small and large, rural and urban, with critical capital needs. This year's slate covers projects in Salem, Astoria, Coos Bay, Baker City, Bend, Jacksonville, Joseph, Government Camp, Warm Springs, Ashland, and Portland.

I also hope you'll consider one-time funding for large arts organization to complete a match made by Oregon's private philanthropic organizations.

Thank you for your leadership, and thanks for giving strong consideration to positive action on these bills which will better position arts, culture, heritage and humanities in Oregon and allow us to preserve our treasures and innovate for the future of this critical piece of state infrastructure.

Sincerely,



Adam Davis
Executive Director, Oregon Humanities