

PORTLAND OPERA

Dear Chair Nguyen, Vice Chairs Diehl and Isadore, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development, Small Business, and Trade,

I'm writing on behalf of Portland Opera urging your support for House Bill 3189. The arts are more than entertainment—they are the heartbeat of our communities, the soul of our culture, and a driving force in our economy. Yet over the past three years, the performing arts have endured profound hardship—darkened theaters, silenced orchestras, and lost livelihoods. Despite these challenges, we have persevered, committed to keeping creativity and inspiration alive.

Portland Opera, now celebrating its 60th anniversary, has made difficult but necessary choices to secure its future. Selling our longtime home was not just a financial decision but a commitment to adapt and remain a cornerstone of Portland's artistic landscape. Our new downtown location represents renewal and resilience, reinforcing the arts' role in revitalizing our city.

The impact of the arts extends far beyond cultural enrichment. They generate billions in revenue, create jobs, attract tourism, and sustain local businesses. When audiences attend performances, they support restaurants, hotels, and public transportation. Without the arts, the hospitality industry struggles, small businesses suffer, and our communities lose a vital source of energy and growth.

HB3189 would double the Oregon Arts Commission's grants budget to \$10 million, ensuring that Oregon's vibrant arts and culture continue to thrive. Additionally, I urge you to approve the -1 amendment, providing \$5.5 million in critical support for Oregon's anchor arts organizations, including Portland Opera.

As Oregon's largest opera company, we are proud to be part of a creative ecosystem that enriches lives, strengthens communities, and fuels our economy. Investing in the arts through HB3189 means investing in Oregon's future, in a thriving cultural landscape, and in the very essence of what makes life meaningful.

I urge you to stand with us. Support HB3189 and help ensure that the arts remain a source of inspiration, connection, and economic vitality for generations to come.

Thank you for your time and commitment to Oregon's cultural and economic future.



Sue Dixon
General Director & CEO
Portland Opera