

Submitter: Kris Kern

On Behalf Of: Portland State University

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Capital Construction Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB 5505

Dear Co-Chair Kate Lieber, Co-Chair Tawna Sanchez, and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means,

My name is Kris Kern, and I am a Professor Emerita and former Performing Arts Librarian at Portland State University. Having dedicated many years to serving our vibrant academic community, I am writing to express my strong support for Portland State University's proposed Performing Arts & Culture Center.

Throughout my tenure at PSU, I witnessed the transformative power of education and the arts in enriching the lives of students and the broader community. Arts education is a vital component of a well-rounded academic experience—developing critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and emotional intelligence.

The proposed performing arts center will offer PSU students, Portlanders, and Oregonians unparalleled opportunities to engage with the arts, whether through performance, production, or appreciation. This engagement will enrich their academic journeys and prepare them for diverse and dynamic careers that are essential to sustaining the performing arts throughout Oregon.

As someone deeply invested in community engagement and education, I strongly support **PSU's Capital Construction request for \$85 million in Article-G Bonds**. This funding will ensure that Portland continues to grow as a center for the performing arts while fostering connections between PSU and the broader Oregon community.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the talent available for productions across the state. This project will address that challenge and ensure that Oregon has a thriving arts community for decades to come.

Moreover, this center will serve as a bridge between the university and the broader Oregon community. It will provide a venue for community arts programs, workshops, and performances that foster collaboration and cultural exchange. By opening its doors to the community, the performing arts center will strengthen the bond between PSU and residents across the state, creating a vibrant cultural nexus.

In addition to its educational and cultural benefits, the performing arts center will help restore downtown Portland as a thriving, dynamic area where people want to live, work, and visit. It aligns perfectly with PSU's mission to serve the community and will ensure that Portland remains a center of cultural and educational excellence.

As someone who has dedicated their career to education and community service, I understand the importance of investing in projects that drive cultural and economic growth. PSU's Performing Arts and Culture Center will not only enrich the lives of PSU students and faculty but will also have a lasting positive impact on communities throughout Oregon.

Thank you for your consideration and for your dedication to serving our state.

Sincerely,

Kris Kern

Professor Emerita, Portland State University