

May 1, 2025

Oregon State Legislature
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Attn: Subcommittee on Capital Construction
900 Court St. NE, Room H-178
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 5506

To Whom it May Concern at the Subcommittee on Capital Construction of the Joint Committee of Ways and Means,

I am writing to support SB 5506 as it will help enable Portland State University's (PSU) efforts to develop a new performing arts venue at the southern edge of their campus in downtown Portland. A new performing arts complex at PSU would not only keep a signature civic auditorium in the "Auditorium District," it would also dramatically expand the types and variety of analogous uses on a single site in a highly visible and accessible location between the Park Blocks and South Waterfront.

Bond funds resulting from SB 5506 will help develop a state-of-the-art new venue and allow the current facility to operate while the new one is constructed. This will ensure that Broadway shows will continue to come to Portland and that scheduling for these important (and lucrative) travelling shows will not be adversely affected. The new city facility at PSU would be part of a mixed-use development, including multiple event theaters, administrative offices, academic rooms and a hotel with conference and meeting spaces. This unique variety of spaces and uses will expand opportunities for all Oregonians to view, engage in and learn about different types of theatrical performances, from staged Broadway shows to musical concerts to intimate dance recitals. In addition, the diverse mix of uses will also provide activation on street frontages and existing transit station areas during both event and non-event times of day and night.

SB 5506 and the resulting funds for the new event venue at PSU will also help to create a "+1" opportunity for a new civic attraction in downtown Portland at the city-controlled site of the existing Keller Auditorium. Construction of a replacement venue at PSU will allow for the reconsideration of the current Keller site for – perhaps another event venue – or perhaps another, different cultural destination that would help bring more people to downtown Portland for more of the time. The new civic destination could also be part of a mixed-use development that incorporates much needed affordable housing in a central location of the city.

I urge you to approve SB 5506, helping to expand arts and culture opportunities to all Oregonians on the campus of Portland's most accessible university and in the heart of the state's densest city. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Mark Raggett
Southeast Portland