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May 2, 2013

To: Co-Chair Burdick, Co-Chair Barnhart, Joint Tax Credit Committee Members

From: Steve Bass, President and CEO, Oregon Public Broadcasting

Re: Testimony in Support of SB 319 and HB 2470

Chairs Burdick and Barnhart and members of the Joint Tax Credit Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you and express my support for SB 319 and HB 2470.

The Oregon Cultural Trust plays a critical role in supporting arts and culture at the statewide level as well as in communities, counties and Tribes all around the state.

For OPB, the Cultural Trust has provided \$230,000 in grants over the last 12 years to support cultural and historical programming. As just one example, the recent OPB documentary on Tom McCall, which I recently shared with all members of the Legislature, was produced with support from the Oregon Cultural Trust.

The Cultural Trust helps in OPB's work in less direct ways as well. By funding arts organizations around the state, the Trust helps create a wealth of stories that OPB covers each week on *Oregon Art Beat*, allowing us to share the artistic and cultural splendors of our state.

Outside of my day job with OPB, I have two other perspectives on the value of the Oregon Cultural Trust. As a musician who serves as principal clarinetist for the Oregon East Symphony in Pendleton, I see very directly how the Cultural Trust enables a small rural community to bring orchestral music into the lives of children and adults who otherwise would have no opportunity to experience it live.

I have also served on the board of the Clackamas Cultural Alliance. As you know, an important part of the mission of the Cultural Trust is to provide funding to counties and Tribes to support artistic projects that they themselves decide are worthwhile. This process is a great example of how the best decisions are often those made closest to the community, and I had the opportunity to engage in that process for Clackamas County for several years.

The Oregon Cultural Trust is a unique approach to arts funding. No other state has this kind of method, first encouraging people to donate to arts & culture organizations and then magnifying the impact of their giving through the Cultural Trust.

It's an idea worthy of the legacy of Governor Tom McCall and other visionaries who created Oregon's reputation as a place where bold ideas are tried and, more often than not, succeed.

The Oregon Cultural Trust is working. I hope you'll keep it going.

Cultural Advocacy Coalition

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