



## culturaladvocacycoalition

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Testimony in support of HB 2470

House Rules Committee

February 18, 2013

Chair Garrett, members of the committee, for the record my name is Kevin Campbell and I am here this afternoon on behalf of the Cultural Advocacy Coalition, speaking in support of HB 2470.

In 2001, the Oregon Cultural Trust was established to support, stabilize and protect Oregon culture; and to enhance the lives of Oregonians by increasing opportunities to experience Oregon's unique cultural offerings. The Trust was an expression of legislative support for the value that culture brings to our communities, our classrooms and our economy. It was designed to be a vessel for state support and an opportunity to partner with Oregonians.

The structure of the Trust is unique in the nation. While donations to the Trust are eligible for a state tax credit of \$500 for individuals, \$1000 for joint filers and \$2500 for corporations—donors *must first give an equal amount to a cultural nonprofit*. Because of this important feature in our Trust's structure we can be confident that the 25,000 individual gifts which totaled \$32.5 million in gifts to the Trust over the last 10 years, have strengthened Oregon's nonprofit community with \$32.5 million in matching contributions.

You will hear today about another distinctive feature of the Trust: every county in Oregon has established a local, all-volunteer arm of the Oregon Cultural Trust, which redistributes Trust funds to hundreds of small, local programs. These groups, called County Cultural Coalitions have distributed \$4.2 million through 1,900 grants statewide over the last 10 years. The County Coalitions receive their funds from the Trust based on population and typically offer grants ranging in size from \$1,000-\$5,000 each. They are awarded based on the coalition's goals for culture in their own counties, with the expectation that they will be highly responsive to local community needs and will be easily accessed by smaller organizations and emerging artists.

The Trust's first grants were distributed in May 2003. Since that time \$12.7 million has been distributed to nearly 1,000 programs through the Trust itself and an additional 1,900 projects through county cultural coalitions statewide. You will hear specific program and grant impacts from the Trust, county coalition leaders and the nonprofit community today.

Besides supporting valuable programming, Oregon Culture also strengthens our economy. In a recent study of Oregon's cultural sector, ECONorthwest found that the 1,300 nonprofits, whose work is eligible for support through the Oregon Cultural Trust, directly generated \$580.5 million in sales into our economy and provided \$272.8 million in wages to Oregonians. These are the paychecks that support Oregon families.

When ECONorthwest considered supply-chain and consumption-driven spending, total economic impacts hit \$1.2 billion in sales, with taxable income climbing to \$466 million. This provides an estimated \$57.2 million in tax and fee revenues for state and local governments to fund schools, ensure public safety and support other important state programs.

The original legislation which created the Oregon Cultural Trust put it this way: children educated in arts and culture will contribute to the creative workforce of the new economy; and a state with a vibrant arts and cultural life attracts and retains educated people and progressive businesses.

The Cultural Advocacy Coalition supports reauthorization of the Cultural Trust tax credit, which allows for continued partnership with Oregonians in the growth and development of a Cultural Trust; offering a source of ongoing funding to the Oregon Arts Commission, the Oregon Historical Society, Oregon Humanities, the Oregon Heritage Commission, the State Historic Preservation Office, as well as tribal and county coalitions and cultural nonprofits throughout the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify this afternoon. I am happy to take any questions from the Committee.