



CHRISTOPHER MATTALIANO
GENERAL DIRECTOR

Public Testimony in support, SB 319

March 12, 2013

Senator Lee Beyer, Chair
Senator Bruce Starr, Vice-Chair
Senator Chris Edwards
Senator Fred Girod
Senator Rod Monroe
Senator Chuck Thomsen

Chair Beyer and members of the Senate Business and Transportation Committee,

Few tax credits can be measured by the real benefit they provide Oregon's citizens throughout the state. By any measure, the Oregon Cultural Trust Tax Credit provides some of the best returns for citizens in every corner of Oregon in concrete and measurable ways.

An outstanding example of this is *Portland Opera To Go* (POGO), for which Portland Opera has received numerous Cultural Trust grants over the past decade.

POGO is one of Oregon's only statewide arts tours for students and families, presenting a 50-minute English language opera adaptation and classroom workshops across Oregon during a 12 week winter tour in January through March. It reaches as many as 25,000 young people and families in up to 90 schools and communities throughout the entire state. *POGO* also provides multidisciplinary 80-100 page Study Guides used by 90% of teachers and classroom workshops that use the performance to address more than 75 individual Oregon Content Standards in science, language arts, social studies, and math.


When we say that *POGO* serves every corner of Oregon, we mean literally every corner of the state. More than half of the performances are outside the Portland Metro area, down the Willamette Valley, to the Coast, High Desert, and the Idaho border. Over the past three years, the tour has visited virtually every legislative district, from Astoria to Waldport on the Coast, to the Eastern Oregon communities of La Grande, Elgin, Baker City, Mosier, Halfway, Ontario, Burns, Klamath Falls – and in between. 72% of schools served are Title I, and 25% are classified as "very rural", with extremely limited access to arts.

What does the annual Cultural Trust grant mean to this tour? It funds literally an additional two weeks on the road during which we serve 12-15 additional rural communities and 5,000 young people that we normally couldn't reach.

And, it extends the reach beyond that which we could achieve by leveraging extensive additional support from just about every foundation and corporate funder that supports arts education programs of this nature, including JELD-WEN, the Schnitzer CARE Foundation, The Standard, US Bank, Bank of America and Schnitzer Steel, among others.

On behalf of Portland Opera, our Board of Directors, and the more than 400,000 Oregonians we serve annually, we urge you to support Senate Bill 319 for the renewal of the Oregon Cultural Trust Tax Credit.


Christopher Mattaliano
General Director


Peter J. Bilotta
Director of Development