



To: Senate Committee on Business and Transportation  
From: David G. Lewis, PhD, Tribal Historian, Cultural Exhibits and Archives Program,  
Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde  
Date: March 12, 2013  
Subject: SB 319 – Trust for Cultural Development Tax Credit

Chair Beyer, Vice Chair Starr, Vice Chair Thomsen and members of the Senate Committee on Business and Transportation, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of Senate Bill 319. My name is David Lewis, and I work as Tribal Historian with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. I am also the manager of the Cultural Exhibits and Archives Program.

Since 2009, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Cultural Trust Board has received a grant from the Oregon State Cultural Trust averaging \$6,350.00. Funding received by the Oregon State Cultural Trust is distributed by the tribes Cultural Trust Board and helps to support an array of cultural activities and events, including:

- Chinuk Wawa Language Project – Before there was a reservation at Grand Ronde, there was a hybrid indigenous language held in common by many tribal ancestors. With funding from the Oregon Cultural Trust, the tribe developed classes in Chinuk Wawa, this teaching of the original common language is an important aspect in preserving the Grand Ronde tribal community.
- Participation in Canoe Journeys – Annually, Grand Ronde Tribal members take part in a 200-mile canoe journey that travels from Oregon to various tribal homelands in Washington. Along the way members of the canoe family trade songs and stories, and share food and shelter with many other tribal nations. This journey perseveres tribal culture, and helps to build relationships with neighboring tribes.

In 2012, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde received a \$15,000 grant from the Oregon Cultural Trust for the purchase of display cabinets for the Tribal Museum. The Museum complex is being renovated and the tribe is preparing to open the gallery in 2014. The Tribal has about 10,000 artifacts and we expect to receive up to 250,000 visitors a year. Funds from the cultural trust are being used to plan and construct the display cabinets for the “Great Room” museum gallery to receive the first exhibits of tribal history and culture in 2014.

A portion of funding for the Oregon Cultural Trust comes from donations made by individuals. Senate Bill 319 seeks to extend the tax credit for these donations to the year 2020. The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde supports this extension for the benefits to Grand Ronde tribal members, as well as the heritage and the culture of other Oregon tribes, and the State of Oregon. The Oregon State Heritage Commission and other heritage organizations have been looking for solutions for funding heritage resources and preservation by heritage organizations and the Cultural Trust Tax Credit is part of the solution to this problem.

Funding received by the Cultural Trust Board not only benefits our current generation of tribal members, it also allows us to educate our young people ensuring that our unique tribal culture is practiced and celebrated by future generations.

**Please support Senate Bill 319.**