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February 4, 2016

Honorable Peter Buckley
71 Dewey Street
Ashland, OR 97520

Re: Funding for Holly Theatre

Dear Representative Buckley:

The City of Medford supports the Holly Theatre restoration and asks for your support of the funding request in front of legislature this session.

The Holly Theatre was a beloved part of our downtown's vibrancy until it closed in 1986. Since then, its deteriorated condition has contributed to the blight that hampers our efforts to bring this corner of our downtown back to life. A restored and operating concert and event center will be a strong driver in the resurgence of a whole neighborhood. It is such an important factor that the City Council added the theater's restoration as a key factor to downtown success in a 2011 amendment to the Medford Urban Renewal Agency's "City Center Revitalization Plan."¹ The theater restoration meets both the City's economic development and historic preservation goals.

By bringing up to 1,000 individuals, roughly 180 nights a year into the neighborhood, studies show the theater will add more than \$3 million to the local economy and create more than 87 full-time equivalent jobs in this economically disadvantaged census tract.² It will also spur millions of dollars—possibly hundreds of millions—in additional downtown development nearby³ and bring roughly 10,000 hotel guests a year to our community.⁴

The Medford Urban Renewal Agency has granted \$200,000 toward the building's seismic retrofit and another \$100,000 in Façade Improvement Grant funds. It is important for the Holly to continue without additional City funding. The Holly Theatre's programming and business model comes from the organization's sister theater—the Cascade Theatre in Redding, California. That theater has

1 City of Medford "City Center Revitalization Plan and Report" 2006, as amended 10/27/2011

2 Americans for the Arts "Arts and Economic Prosperity IV" study and US Census Bureau

3 Newberry Opera House & Proctors Theatre case studies

4 Zip code analysis of Cascade Theatre, Redding, California ticket buyers (Holly Theatre's sister theater and programming model)

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operated its entire 12-year history in the black with no annual funding from government, foundation or private sources.⁵ The similarly sized Holly Theatre is located in a region with far less competition for similar programming or similarly sized venues for rental revenue—in fact, the Holly will be more than one-third larger than our next largest venue, allowing it to program events that currently don't happen in our town,⁶ and 10-year projections indicate it will be similarly self-sustaining.⁷

We urge you to support this project for the benefit of our community.

Sincerely,



Gary H. Wheeler

Mayor

5 Audited financials

6 Carpenter Foundation requested study comparing Cascade Theatre programming (the Holly Theatre's programming model) to Medford's Craterian Theatre programming.

7 Ten-year Holly Theatre business plan and income projections, based off of actual data from Cascade Theatre, Redding, California