

Rep Whisnant

From: Elizabeth Haberman <liz.haberman@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 15, 2017 2:25 PM
To: Representative Gene Whisnant
Subject: Funding for Oregon Arts and Culture--HB5025, SB5530

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Dear Representative Whisnant,

First, I wanted to thank you and your staff for your hard work this session. I understand it has been very challenging and I wanted to let you know your work is appreciated.

I am writing to ask for your help in three specific areas:

- * HB 5025- Protect funding for the Oregon Arts Commission by restoring the department's General Fund allocation to \$4,115,924 from the current proposal of \$3,843,926.
- * Increase funding for arts and culture if the legislature increases revenues; and
- * SB 5530- Support infrastructure in the cultural sector by funding \$6 million in capital projects in the cultural sector, proposed by the Cultural Advocacy Coalition, which includes projects in Cave Junction, Eugene, Portland, Bend, Newport, Corvallis and Cottage Grove.

In a session when the budget is the center of attention, I am hoping that you will be willing to be a champion for arts and culture funding in our community by reaching out to your colleagues to make sure these concerns are addressed. I know that key decisions are often made before you as a legislator even cast a vote. And, I also know you must be extremely busy, but a cut to the small budget of the Oregon Arts Commission of 12% is projected to result in reduced funding in grants for arts organizations in our community of 30 percent. Add to this the federal level proposals which would eliminate funding for cultural agencies entirely in FY18 and the result is crippling shortfalls in state and federal funding, putting Oregon's cultural sector at grave risk.

Any assistance you can provide to encourage innovation, support Oregon's growing creative economy and protect access to high quality arts experiences in your district is greatly appreciated.

Thank you again for all that you do!

Sincerely,

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