

May 16, 2017

Dear Co-Chairs Girod and Holvey and members of the committee,

My name is Dana Whitelaw, I'm the Executive Director of the High Desert Museum. Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony in support of SB5530 and capital construction funding in the cultural sector with \$6M for a package of eight cultural projects that have been through a rigorous peer review and have demonstrated that they will grow jobs, expand access to cultural experiences and preserve, restore and exhibit culturally significant artifacts and historic treasures for Oregonians.

These eight projects cross the state - and include the Chateau at the Oregon Caves , the Benton County Historical Society, the Eugene Ballet, the Newport Performing Arts Center, Portland Art Museum, Portland Institute of Contemporary Art, The Cottage Theatre in Cottage Grove and our very own High Desert Museum in Central Oregon.

The High Desert Museum's total project is estimated at \$1 million dollars, our part of the state package is \$250,000. With these funds, we will be renovating the nationally recognized Native American wing, exhibiting the priceless Bounds Collections of Plateau Indian art and adding a gallery dedicated to *Art of the American West*.

This project has significant cultural and economic impacts. We enlisted Portland-based ECONorthwest to help us crank those numbers, the project will contribute over 2.6 million in total output and annual expenditures, add 13 jobs for Central Oregon during construction and steady state periods, including 2 new employees working directly for the museum.

For those of us east of the Cascades, the closest dedicated art museum is in Eugene. As a result, the High Desert Museum serves a central role in providing museum-quality experiences and education and this project addresses the need of providing equitable arts and culture experiences across the State. Economically, the sum of the parts of our region is greater, and more enriching, with a vibrant, well-funded Museum, than without it.

The High Desert Museum will celebrate its 35th anniversary this year – I hope that you'll consider making this significant contribution to supporting the important work that we've done, the region's economic future, and the important work that we'll continue to accomplish in the cultural sector.

Thank you for the work that you do for all Oregonians,

Dana Whitelaw, Ph.D.
Executive Director

