



Oregon Museum of
Science and Industry

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March 20, 2020

The Honorable Arnie Roblan
The Honorable Paul Holvey
The Joint Special Committee on Coronavirus Response
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Roblan and Representative Holvey,

OMSI, like organizations across the globe, is experiencing an unprecedented loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As each one of us takes steps to keep loved ones healthy and to support our community, OMSI temporarily closed the museum and halted all of our programming on March 14, 2020. While we recognize and are grateful for our local and state leadership during this time, OMSI is increasing our focus on how we can support the community now and in the future.

As a 501(c)3, OMSI does not receive any government funding, but relies on earned and contributed revenue for our annual operations. The revenue that we rely on has been affected on all sides during our busiest time of the year - museum admission, education and program fees, memberships, and facility rentals have all been cancelled while our largest fundraising event of the year hangs in the balance. If the museum remains closed through June, we expect to lose a minimum of \$8M over the next quarter, with a resultant 12-month loss approaching \$15M. This closure will also cause significant local economic impact, risking the employment of nearly 300 part-time and full-time staff and causing the cancellation of contracts and vendor relationships.

But the financial loss is amplified by the loss of OMSI services to our statewide community. OMSI visits every county in the state to bring educational experiences to rural schools and communities; we have camps on the central coast and high desert, and we partner with community-based organizations to develop programming that supports historically underserved audiences. Our revenue supports this work, bringing hands-on science education to inspire all of us to come together to solve big problems.

OMSI is still hard at work to deliver on our mission to support the community. We are thinking not simply about how we can survive this crisis, but about who we want to help Oregon be when we recover. Right now, our educators are coming together in a range of ways to support the community, and we hope emergency relief funds will support our continued work in these areas.

- **ESSENTIAL CHILDCARE:** We are aligning with Multnomah County and the State to provide high-quality, school-aged care for essential workers during this crisis.
- **REMOTE EDUCATION:** Our educators are creating meaningful digital programming to support learning at home as well as developing curriculum for teachers when they return to the classroom to mitigate our state's inequitable brain drain during this time and support the upward momentum of Oregon's graduation rate.

Our leadership team and Board have been in mitigation planning to assess cost-cutting across the institution, assessing future scenarios, including the possibility of making impossible decisions about staffing.

We respectfully request that OMSI — and other cultural organizations— are included in emergency financial support. Our work is critical to the future, helping to engage, inspire, and increase public understanding of the science that underpins successful responses to crises such as pandemics. Together, let's ensure that our community stands strong on the other side of this crisis, and we educate the scientists who will prepare for and prevent the next pandemic.

Sincerely,



Nancy Stueber
President and CEO