

Feb. 14, 2019

House Committee on Economic Development

RE: SB 2052, Oregon Cultural Trust

Extends sunset for tax credit for contributions to Trust for Cultural Development Account

Dear Committee Members,

I am the Executive Director of Metropolitan Youth Symphony (MYS) located in Portland, Oregon. I am in full support of extending the sunset for tax credit for contributions to the Trust for Cultural Development Account for ten years.

MYS serves a unique role in our community, providing instruction and performance opportunities for young people at all levels of musical experience in orchestra, band and jazz. Over 500 K-12 students from eight counties across the Portland metro area participate.

Access and inclusion are core components of our program:

- Our peer-to-peer School Outreach Program exposes over 5,000 low-income students in Oregon to instrumental music through concerts at their schools each season. Last season 65% of students reached were non-white with 79% on Free or Reduced Lunch. At least three schools in central Oregon are reached each year. All local area outreach schools receive ticket vouchers to attend a MYS concert at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall.
- Our Tuition-Free Beginning Strings Program provides 60 low-income elementary students in NE Portland and Hillsboro the instruction needed to play in our entry level string ensembles. This year, 100% of these students are on Free or Reduced Lunch and 93% are from minority backgrounds. All Beginning Strings students receive loaner instruments.
- MYS provides a strong Tuition Assistance program for all students who qualify. Currently 12% of our students are on this program.
- Our small-group coaching program provides 150 sessions throughout the organization each year, primarily with members of the Oregon Symphony.

The Oregon Cultural Trust has supported various aspects of our Access and Equity programming for at least nine years. OCT support is critical to the successful execution of these programs and helps to ensure that students who would not otherwise have the opportunity to hear a concert or learn an instrument can.

I am also thrilled to personally donate to the Trust. My husband and I consistently reach our maximum contribution and are grateful that this option is available to the citizens of Oregon. As both an executive arts administrator and as a private donor, I cannot image the arts landscape in Oregon without the Trust.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely



Diana Scoggins

Executive Director

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