

February 15, 2019

Representative John Lively, Chair
House Committee on Economic Development
900 Court St., NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2052 Support, Oregon Cultural Trust

Chair Lively & Members of the Committee:

Travel Oregon's vision is a better life for all Oregonians through, strong, sustainable local economies. This includes enhancing economies throughout the state by helping communities better leverage the state's \$11.8 billion tourism industry. It also means working together with partners, such as the Oregon Cultural Trust, to provide arts and culture experiences to enhance the visitor experience while also enriching Oregonians' quality of life.

The Oregon Cultural Trust is one of the key partners in supporting the state's arts, heritage, and humanities organizations and programs. From historical societies to theater to dance to music, many of us grew up learning about arts and culture through one of the many programs that the Oregon Cultural Trust helps support. As a key driver of the tourism industry, Travel Oregon strongly supports HB 2052, which extends the sunset for tax credit for contributions for the Cultural Development Account for 10 years. In 2017, Oregon received an estimated 10 million overnight leisure travelers who visited historic places and participated in one or multiple art and cultural related activities. That represents nearly 30 percent of the yearly overnight marketable trips to Oregon.

In 2018, we partnered with the Oregon Cultural Trust to create the Oregon Mural Trail, inspiring Oregonians and visiting explorers to get outside and experience the natural wonders of each destination, as well as generate a sense of community pride, enhance local economic impact and contribute to local arts and culture initiatives. Visitors were encouraged to travel across the state, following the mural trail to experience the magic of these Oregon communities while contributing to their local economies.

In celebration of the Oregon Mural Trail launch, Travel Oregon, in partnership with the Oregon Cultural Trust, also hosted community events and ribbon-cuttings in each of the mural communities throughout the months of October and early November. The communities where you can find these murals are: Ontario, The Dalles, Prineville, Oakridge, Forest Grove, Roseburg, and Yachats.

Continuing the Oregon Cultural Trust Tax Credit through HB 2052 is critical to supporting art and culture initiatives across the state, and subsequently arts and culture tourism to continued success. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Scott West
Chief Strategy Officer, Travel Oregon