

I would like to provide verbal testimony in support of SB5555. Living Room Theaters is a movie theater with full service restaurant and bar that has been in operation since late 2006 in downtown Portland. We were shuttered completely from mid-March through the end of July where we took advantage of our "restaurant" status to attempt to generate some business through private reservations until we were again shut down in late November. Because we couldn't sell tickets, the few major studio titles released during that July-November time period were not available to us. We have suffered a 96.5% drop in revenue over the period since mid-March 2020. Over this time, through the help of a PPP loan, we were able to keep our management salaried staff employed but we were forced to furlough our regular theater staff due to lack of revenue/business. This took us from nearly 30 FT/PT staff to 5 full time. We've gone from \$3M+ in gross sales to less than \$100K.

We recognize and support the need for public safety because without it, our guests won't feel comfortable coming to a social entertainment destination. At the same time, there must be room for more middle ground. It makes no sense that restaurants have been able to operate at 25-50% capacity serving food to tables where their customers are facing each other less than 6 feet from each other while eating/conversing with no face masks, but we are prohibited from doing the same in an environment where guests are not facing each other or talking.

The state provided financial relief to live venue operators in 2020, but movie exhibition was left out from receiving those funds. Our industry has been one of the most directly impacted by COVID-19 and associated restrictions and yet has received the least amount of assistance. We are in desperate need of a life-line to keep us going. Please pass SB5555 and provide funding as soon as possible.

Thank you,
Steve Herring
CEO
Living Room Theaters