

To Whom It May Concern,

Venues are an essential economic recovery engine for neighborhoods, cities, and regions big and small all over the state of Oregon.

Sadly, no industry has been hit harder for longer, as the initial 2020 COVID response required all venues to endure more than a year of total closure, which was immediately followed by the Delta and Omicron surges causing ongoing disruptions that continue today.

Pickathon in Happy Valley was impacted especially hard by COVID.

After 21 years of continuous operation, Pickathon was required to completely close in 2020.

The initial financial support Pickathon received from the state and federal government helped Pickathon hold on with the hope that 2021 would be a recovery year.

Unfortunately, the Delta surge required Pickathon to cancel the 2021 festival, which put Pickathon in the nearly impossible situation of being a small business having to navigate a second full year without any income.

The challenges to reopen safely in 2022 are even bigger for Pickathon (and many other venues), as not only do we have to find a way to keep the business operating without any income, but we are now facing an array of increases in personnel, deferred maintenance, new infrastructure costs, and uncertain ticket sales.

Even with our extreme challenges, we remain optimistic that with the help of HB4040, venues statewide can reopen and resume our vital role in providing jobs, generating economic activity, anchoring culture, driving tourism, and building safe and vibrant communities for decades to come.

Thank you for factoring in this important part of Oregon's economic recovery as we collectively move forward to recover and rebuild our unique and amazing state.

Sincerely,

Zale Schoenborn

Founder of the Pickathon Music Festival.