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# AFRODADDY'S JAZZ

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February 7, 2022

BLANCHARDBOYS, LLC  
20121 SE STARK ST.  
SUITE 107  
PORTLAND, OREGON, 97233

Dear Oregon's House Committee on Economic Recovery and Prosperity:

My name is Carmen Blanchard and I'm the sole founder, owner, manager and curator of Afrodaddy's Jazz located in the Portland Metro area.

Afrodaddy's Jazz is a jazz club dedicated to widening jazz audiences in the state of Oregon. My business location is strategically located in an underserved area in the arts. I made the investment, Afrodaddy's Jazz, to take, what they call jazz, to the people. So far, I've made live jazz accessible to all! I'm also happy to share that unbeknownst to me at the time of establishing my business. I became the first woman of color (NOT THE LAST) to solely start, own and program a jazz club in the Pacific Northwest. Please checkout my website!

( [www.afrodaddyjazz.club](http://www.afrodaddyjazz.club) )

It's my understanding your committee will be considering the allocation of emergency business funding to private businesses like mine in the arts and cultural sector. Unfortunately, there has been a dire need for many businesses of color across many industries like Afrodaddy's Jazz, who have not been able to access federal PPP or SVOG grants due to program guidelines and/or integrity to their business model and family values.

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Therefore, I'd ask your committee to consider allocating the moneys set aside at the state level (HB 4040) to help save my business and other cultural organizations in the state. Since March 2020 – TO PRESENT, I've experienced twenty – one- months of earned income loss.

- Nine months in 2020
- Ten months in 2021
- Two months in 2022 so far

An emergent need to the current condition of the state's private and public cultural organizations is an understatement. Our arts and tourism industry are in serious jeopardy. Our current path of no earned income alongside monthly business expenses will become unsustainable for me.

As a music venue, Afrodaddy's Jazz, has CURRENT and PAST expenses that continue to rise due to COVID-19. Such as,

- Over \$120,000 in YEARLY commercial leasing expenses since March 2020.
- MONTHLY business insurance, electrical, water and NW Gas utilities alongside YEARLY city, county and state licenses, permits and fees since MARCH 2020, for what?

AFTER being shuttered for sixteen months, I opened after the initial mandate was lifted on JUNE 30, 2021. I was opened for only two months in 2021 due to DELTA, OMICRON, LOW TICKET SALES, VACCINE MANDATES, MASKS MANDATES, PAYROLL RETENTION NEEDS, STAFFING ISSUES, COVID FEAR, MUSICIANS CANCELLING alongside other factors such as crime and housing insecurities in my small business location.

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I cannot stress enough that the last thing we need in our neighborhoods are failures in the arts. We need more access to the arts NOT less! Call me passionate but this is unacceptable because I know for certain Oregon LOVES the arts! Oregon has a historical record for utilizing the arts to breed healthy individuals, feed healthy families and produce strong neighborhoods!  
#staythecourse

I'm sure you get many letters so I hope you accept my testimony to the state's current arts and cultural condition as true and worthy of your attention. Certainly not an easy gig you all have so I personally thank you for all your hard work and wish you all the very best.

Sincerely,



Carmen Blanchard

2/7/2022

*Afrodaddy's Jazz*

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