



“the ‘it’ company...one of the most dynamic dance troupes in the country” — *Oregon Public Broadcasting*  
“there’s no mistaking the distinct, delightful genius of NW Dance Project” — *Mass Live*  
“some of the best dancers you will ever see” — *Calgary Herald*  
“an essential part of the city’s arts scene” — *The Oregonian*  
“a company of slick, skilled dancers” — *The New Yorker*

January 24, 2023

Re: Supporting HB 2459

To: Oregon State Legislator and the House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business

As the founding Directors of NW Dance Project, Portland’s award-winning contemporary dance company and arts education organization operating since 2004, we **urge** you to support HB 2459.

The financial (and other) impacts of the pandemic to performing arts and education organizations cannot be overstated and are decidedly still with us (you must know Oregon had some of the lengthiest restrictions in the country). We experienced a prolonged period of virtually no earned revenue due to cancelled shows, events, and classes — all which came with significant cash refunding, in fact — yet many of our operating expenses (rent, utilities, [reduced] payroll, insurances, etc.) and workloads remained in full effect.

We won’t even get into the logistical and scheduling disruptions, challenges, and general chaos that were the result of adapting to rolling pandemic restrictions and realities.

Our current revenue is under 50% of 2019 levels due depressed class enrollment and performance attendance. We and other arts groups in the state predict it will be years before we are “back to normal”, if ever.

The arts are a significant economic and cultural sector in Oregon and deserve to be supported further. Previous relief money has long been depleted. This is an existential crisis. Seriously.


Through its \$50 million in funding for arts and culture organizations in the state, HB 2459 is absolutely critical for the survival of many organizations, including NW Dance Project.

We urge all our elected officials and representatives to fully support the passage of this vital bill.

We need help and direct support as much as ever — it’s still bleak and challenging out here.

Sincerely and Respectfully,

  
Scott Lewis  
Executive Director

  
Sarah Slipper  
Artistic Director