



**OREGON  
MUSEUMS  
ASSOCIATION**

January 25, 2023

**Janice Crane**

Treasurer  
Advocacy Chair

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Dear House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business,

I am writing today to urge you to support HB 2459 during the upcoming legislative session. This act would be vital to the continued economic recovery of cultural organizations in our state.

In March 2020, the American Alliance of Museums estimated that museums nationwide were losing \$33 million per day, and that without support up to 30% of museums, mostly in rural areas, would not reopen. This is a big deal in Oregon, as economic impact data compiled by the American Alliance of Museums and Oxford Economics in 2017 showed that museums in Oregon contribute \$585 million a year to the U.S. economy. In July 2020, Oregon Legislative Emergency Board allocated \$25,984,872 for the Coronavirus Relief Funds for Cultural Support (CRFCS) to support arts and cultural organizations suffering economically from pandemic closures. These funds supported 621 cultural organizations through the beginning of the pandemic.

Oregon experienced some of the longest pandemic-related shutdowns in the country. The arts/culture sector has been heavily affected. Patrons and attendees are still slow to return to in-person gatherings; many performances have been canceled as performers were sick with COVID-19. Attendance rates for some organizations are still less than 59% of what they were before the pandemic. Economists working with the Cultural Advocacy Coalition estimate that recovery for these organizations will take 5 years; much longer than other businesses.

As the Treasurer and Advocacy Chair of the Oregon Museums Association (OMA) and as the Executive Director of one of the imperiled rural museums, I have seen first-hand the impact that the first round of cultural organization recovery grants made in the museum industry. OMA and 70 of OMA's 148 institutional members received vital support from CRFCS. Many of them used this funding to hire back furloughed staff and reopen, or to bolster operations that were at otherwise reduced capacities.

Funding from CRFCS was only available through December 2020. Since then, museums in Oregon have incurred further losses from reduced visitation to indoor venues, reduced school field trips, and reduced tourism. HB 2459 would address these continued needs, and help museums and cultural organizations further recover from the losses sustained over the past three years.

Sincerely,

Janice Crane  
OMA Treasurer & Advocacy Committee Chair