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Dear Representatives

The 2023 Oregon Legislature session has begun and as we continue to advocate for increased funding for arts and culture in Oregon, we would like to draw your attention to and highlight one bill in particular and hope you will consider this new bill the Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon is supporting, HB2459.

The intention of this bill requests \$50 million for continued recovery support and investment of the arts and culture — half the funds will be distributed to our communities similar to how the CARES dollars were distributed earlier throughout the county coalitions. The other half will be earmarked for larger anchor investments and live venues. We know HB2459 is a well crafted bill and will help our creative economy grow throughout the State of Oregon. We encourage you to support this bill and rally your fellow legislators to support these efforts to include HB2459 in context of continued pandemic relief for the arts and culture organizations, economic recovery, and health and growth of our communities in the State of Oregon.

We know you understand from an investment point of view that this not only bolsters our own communities in the neighborhoods we live in but also reaches both urban and rural communities that have struggled throughout this pandemic.

Across the nation, Oregon has experienced some of the longest pandemic-related shutdowns and the arts and culture sector was heavily impacted. We see recovery for this sector as a 5 year cycle. Patrons and attendees are still slow to return to in-person gatherings; many performances have been impacted as performers were sick with COVID-19. Attendance rates for some organizations are less than 59% of what they were before the pandemic.

Here in the tri-county area, the Regional Arts & Culture Council (RACC) responded to our community needs through quick distribution of CARES funding and evolved our grants program to include stage-focused opportunities such as our [Make|Learn|Build](#) grant program, now evolved to [Arts3C](#) grant program (Creation, Cultivation & Community), based on the needs of artists and arts organizations. We expanded [artlook®oregon](#), bolstering arts organizations across the tri-county making programs more accessible to youth, schools and underserved communities, when arts education was not and/or continues not to be fully funded by districts. Like many organizations, RACC went remote and to this day it remains flexible to remote and hybrid workplace opportunities responding to its team members needs and continued support.

The Regional Arts & Culture Council hope you will join us. Please feel free to reach out if you would like to arrange another meeting with us or have additional questions. Thank you so much for being an ally.

All the Best,

**Regional Arts & Culture Council**

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