

30 January 2023

To: Oregon House of Representatives

Fr: Kevin Cradock – co-owner / COO of Revolution Hall, Mississippi Studios, Polaris Hall

Re: Please support Oregon House Bill 2459

I am writing in support of HB2459.

Rebuilding our industry - with all the new economic externalities - has proven quite difficult and is taking longer than anyone imagined. 2021 into 2022 was rough. After 18 months of mandated closure, we all basically lost Q1 of 2022 due to Omicron. The industry itself is still at risk as the professional base / institutional knowledge required to sustain it has welcomed the next generation to its ranks. We owe to them to see this thru and finally get to the other side. However, we soldier on.

Just this past weekend, our independent venues welcomed over 3000 guests to inner SE Portland and over 2500 guests to two economic nodes in NE/N Portland. People from all over the region, many out-of-state, attended a wide variety of performances, covering almost every genre. The musicians and their crews also numbered in excess of 200 persons, and our full staff of 150 employees was fully engaged.

As you have likely heard, for every dollar spent on a ticket, that multiplies into the local economy many fold. I cannot imagine these neighborhoods without the venues at their cores.

Venues are the economic life-blood of the local surrounding economy, essential gathering places to share ideas as a community. Bringing people together is more important now than it ever was. People from all walks of life and from different ends of the political spectrum frequent these venues, to enjoy perhaps one of the most important common denominators around: live events.

Despite increasing recent turnouts (such as this past weekend), our industry is still dealing with depressed concession sales, the highest level of customer support we have ever experienced (e.g.: people write or call us all the time for refunds even if they are just not feeling good). The COVID intense era / closure we all are glad is in the rear view mirror, disrupted our industry so severely, it's taking incredible resources to plot a path forward.

Rebuilding an entire workforce has caused us to sustain perhaps the highest level of turnover we have ever experienced. Add inflation, touring musicians charging more, and the industry faces a chaotic and difficult rebuilding process.

We are steadfast anchors of our local economy. Our industry remains bullish. This funding will ensure our current workforce is stabilized and retrained, will allow us to make the appropriate investments into our physical spaces to return to efficient and safe operation, and bridge the gap between now and COVID being even further in the rearview mirror.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Cradock

Co-Owner, Revolution Hall & Mississippi Studios, Portland OR