

Submitter: Missi Hasting Baker

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Economic Development and Small Business

Measure: HB2459

January 31, 2023

Dear Members of the Committee and of the Oregon Legislature,

My husband John and I are members of a small but very active band called Mojo Holler that is based out of Portland, Oregon. We perform in small and medium sized venues throughout the region to the tune of ~60 performances annually.

Some of the venues where we play regularly are operated by McMenamins, which has been extremely supportive of Oregon-based live music performances by local bands like ours. McMenamins has worked very hard over the years to ensure that musicians are well compensated and have the opportunity to perform in their venues. During the pandemic, it was through the herculean efforts of venues that we were able to maintain a presence. Because of that, we held on to our fan base and were able to sustain our business and artistic efforts without losing ground.

Throughout this time, we have watched so many of these beloved venues struggle with the challenges we all now face: higher costs and lower profit margins can create a disincentive to offer live music, and yet these venues are holding fast to their commitment to provide live music as a cultural imperative. So many people are eager to re-enter live performance spaces throughout Oregon, and so many bands and musicians are eager to offer our songs. A revival of boisterous, joyful performances is afoot, and preserving our stages is vitally important!

Please help our venues stay alive and begin to thrive again during this time of transition. It would be a shame to see them fail at this late stage in the pandemic. The lasting economic impact of closures over the last two and a half years is still being felt, and costs have risen by more than 20%.

On behalf of Mojo Holler and other small bands and independent musicians in Oregon, thank you for your support of the performing arts. We hope you will vote YES on HB 2459.

Missi Hasting Baker
Mojo Holler
Portland, Oregon