



February 14, 2023

The Honorable Dacia Grayber  
Chair, House Committee on Emergency Management,  
General Government and Veterans  
Oregon State Legislature  
Salem, Oregon. 97301

RE: HB 2498, Creation of the Cultural Impact Program

Dear Chair Grayber and Committee Members:

The Covid-19 pandemic severely affected arts organizations throughout Oregon. In rural Coos County, Little Theatre on the Bay experienced two years of shutdowns at our local performing arts venue at the Liberty Theatre. Performers and patrons alike have been slow to audition and attend shows. LTOB is down 50% in the number of shows produced and the attendance at those shows is also down 50%. Performances that have been paid for, with licensing fees in the thousands of dollars have had to be canceled with no refunds.

The mission of Little Theatre on the Bay is to “cultivate the arts in Coos County.” They reach out to everyone in their community and beyond to participate. Being in a rural, underserved community with a large poverty level population means that additional support is necessary.

Easing the awkwardness of the pandemic and being away from other people and out of school, our youth need a place to go and be together in safe social situations. The theatre functions well to facilitate interpersonal relationship roles that have been forgotten while schools and other activities have been focusing on other skills. Not only is theatre a fun way to reconnect with others while learning teamwork and responsibility, it encourages movement and conversation both on stage and off. Theatre builds self-confidence with children and adults, and an opportunity to practice skills in a supportive environment.

Thank you for scheduling HB 2498, the Cultural Impact Program which will keep the arts, heritage and humanities alive in Oregon.

Sincerely,

*Aymée Pedder*

Aymée Pedder  
President, Little Theatre on the Bay