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To the Joint Committee on Ways and Means:

My name is Barbara Mason, and I am founder and President at Golden Road Arts.

Nonprofits promote the well-being of Oregonians every day, providing for basic needs like food and shelter, offering opportunities for education and economic advancement, supporting arts and culture, protecting our civil rights, and so much more. But Oregon's nonprofits are struggling to provide the critical services Oregonians rely on. We need more financial support from the State to attract and retain staff.

We provide hands on and video teaching of art to k-5 children in Washington County Oregon or where ever the internet is accessed

During the last three years Golden Road Arts has provided over 50 art education and art literacy videos as support for teachers, home schoolers and children. We also do hands on after school programs in 3 elementary schools, one with very low income and ethnic families.

To all of our disadvantage, nonprofits face a daunting barrier to fulfilling their essential role on behalf of the state. Nonprofits cannot exist without nonprofit employees, and nonprofit employees have an incredibly high rate of burnout and turnover.

Our people are underpaid and several work part time. We have lost employees to better paying jobs. Due in part to the current structure and requirements of state contracts as well as low pay, heavy workload, understaffing, secondary trauma, and other stressors, nonprofit employees are leaving the sector to seek higher pay and better benefits elsewhere.

The need to invest in the sector is now. Investment this year will improve our ability to recruit and retain staff into the future and for the pressing priorities that have been put forward by the Governor.

By supporting Oregon's nonprofits, you support the well-being of Oregonians. I urge you to support Oregon's nonprofits by reforming State contracting practices and funding nonprofit staff retention.

Thank you for your consideration,
Barbara Mason
President
Goldenroadarts.org