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On Behalf Of: MusicOregon
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

Testimony to Joint Ways and Means Committee in Support of Oregon Arts Recovery Funding Bill (HB 2459) April 8, 2023

Chair Steiner, Chair Sanchez, and members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee

My name is Meara McLaughlin, and I am the Founder and Executive Director of MusicOregon, the nonprofit representing the commercial music ecology in our state which operates alongside legacy Arts and Culture. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. I am here to advocate for smart, inclusive investment in Oregon's arts and music culture even as we address the vital social service priorities of education, housing, and mental health services.

Two weeks ago, your offices each received Business Oregon's first economic impact studies of Oregon's never-before-assessed sectors of Commercial Music and Live Performance. These reports provide new insight into the scope and the potential return on investment from strategic public policy and expenditure.

The Business Oregon report conservatively estimates the Commercial Music sector's economic output at \$3.8 Billion per year. This economic output is in addition to the \$687 Million economic impact of the nonprofit Arts and Culture sector (source: Americans for the Arts). The Commercial Music sector accounts for twenty-three thousand jobs in the state and an estimated \$1 Billion in labor income. For context, this is more than double the employment and wage income reported for the same period by the state's high-profile cannabis industry.

This newly recognized economic engine of popular music and our partners in the legacy arts are under threat from the continuing impacts of the Covid shutdown. I strongly encourage you to support the Arts Recovery Funding Bill, HB 2459. It provides essential financial recovery resources for BOTH nonprofit and for-profit arts and culture organizations, venues, and creators.

There is no debate that Oregon is facing enormous societal challenges, but I urge this committee to view funding for culture NOT as a charitable donation that may be deferred, but as a smart economic investment in communities of every size to sustain and creates jobs, grow traded sector impact, increase tourism allure, and support competitive business environments.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I welcome further conversations.