

Submitter: Shelley Garrett
On Behalf Of: Artichoke Community Music
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

Re: HB 2459 The Arts Recovery Funding Bill

Please reconsider funding this. I'm the Executive Director for Artichoke Community Music...celebrating our 50th year serving the State of Oregon as the hub for folk music. We are a nationally known 501(c)3 providing music lessons, an instrument store specializing in unique stringed instruments and Portland's premier listening room.

Pre-Covid we were thriving as we expanded the folk genre to include more voices and cultures. After Covid, we have not been able to cover basic operating expenses as those line items have increased. Our live events are back about 85%, but the teachers are only contributing 25% of pre-pandemic income since many are continuing to have lessons over ZOOM. The instrument store is only contributing about 30% of former income. Our patrons have less disposable income to support us due to inflation, we'd love to lower our ticket prices, but can't. Many are still concerned about Covid.

We've cut staff from 5 full time, to 1 full time and 1 part-time 2 days a week. We're working with our landlord to decrease our rent, but currently when our lease is up in June, it may not make sense to renew. We've held a store sale, and are having our first ever Telethon to attract monthly donors, so we are doing what we can to help ourselves.

History tells us that it will take 5 years to recover fully.

We support several other non-profits offering our event space a a low cost to allow them to share music with the community. Our Jazz jam that is built to help young players develop confidence has been cut from a weekly event to once a month.

Touring artists rely on us, and spend money in our Oregon for lodging, food and fuel.

We love Portland and our location in the heart of the city at 20th & SE Powell, but several break-ins last year and homeless camps near by have also caused some to be reticent to support us.

We've reinvented ourselves many times over 50 years, and we are doing our best to respond to current conditions...but we need just "a little help from our friends"

Thank you for your time!