

April 14th, 2023 @ 5:00 pm

Newport, Oregon Committee Public Hearing

Dear Joint Committee on Ways & Means,

My name is Kevin Cradock. I co-own and operate [Mississippi Studios](#), [Revolution Hall](#) and [Polaris Hall](#) in Portland. I work alongside 200+ dedicated artists, production technicians, musicians, and restaurant workers. This is in addition to the dozens of allied tradespeople who keep our systems, marketing, and facility infrastructure running. I meet plumbers, electricians, and external vendors almost daily.

Please support HB 2459 - the Arts Recovery Funding Bill.

Our industry's restart after sustained closure - the longest in the US - is a long-term effort. It has only been 1 year since operations resumed 'semi-pre-covid normal'; however, receipts have not fully recovered, costs are up, our workforce brand new, for the most part. That said, we remain bullish. Venues like ours are the anchors of our economic communities. We are invested. We are here to stay. However, we still need help.

In the last 7 days, just at our 3 small venues alone, over 9,500 guests assembled to attend shows, film events, get hotel rooms, taking Ubers / taxis, dining out, shopping, and, alongside the artists performing, breathed essential life and economy into the neighborhoods where they are located.

This is not unique to our venues or to Portland. This is true across the state. I cannot imagine any of the neighborhoods and communities across the state without their arts and culture anchors which-bring hundreds of thousands of people - from all over the state and beyond - together to share ideas, come together - and spend money.

These businesses are the lighthouses which keep our communities connected and neighborhoods thriving. They are key to tourism. They provide jobs beyond our industry's own borders.

In our industry, for every dollar spent on a ticket, that gets multiplied into the local economy twelve-fold - or more. We are an essential component of Oregon's overall economy.

Oregon artists and allied tradespeople who live and work in Oregon, rely on the on the arts industry to support their livelihoods. One administrative perspective - often

overlooked - is the fact that a venue's # 1 cost is not rent or payroll, it's paying the tens of thousands artists, production staff, and the allied trades which support operations. Venues across the state are the key arts and culture commerce nodes which facilitate the wider arts economy.

Additionally, companies and individuals - from other unaffiliated industries - choose to live, work, and/or move to Oregon because of amenities the Oregon arts industry offers their workforces and families. It's one of the main reasons I moved here over 20 years ago.

Since our industry was shut down longer than any other state, - you've heard it, "first to close / last to reopen" (and there is significant latency when you reopen venue since shows are booked far in advance) - our rebuild has been quite challenging - to say the least. It has also been financially treacherous restaffing, reprogramming all while facing new operational externalities.

I still personally do the job of 3 people as we navigate and pivot to the new fiscal realities in play. The essential funding this bill provides our industry takes considerable strain off of operations and will allow our industry to continue the rebuild process more swiftly, with better economic results.

We are here for the long-term. We accept the challenges and current business conditions. We are bullish on our future and proud of what we mean to the wider Oregon economy. We will continue what we started. This funding is key to achieve this goal.

Again, thank you in advance for supporting the Oregon Arts Recovery Funding Bill.

Submitted by Kevin Cradock