



Date: April 28, 2023

To: The Joint Committee on Ways and Means

For: HB 2459 and HB 2498

Dear Vice-Chair Steiner and Vice-Chair Sanchez,

My name is Allison Field and I am the Development Director here on behalf of Painted Sky Center for the Arts in John Day. I live in Canyon City, one of the nine cities in Grant County. I am here to request your support of HB 2498 for \$200M in Lottery Bonds in Long-term Funding for the Corpus of the Oregon Cultural Trust and HB 2459 for \$50M in General Funds for additional recovery for the arts and culture Sector.

By supporting these bills, you will be supporting a critical project in Grant County that serves in frontier, and significantly underrepresented communities. Painted Sky Center for the Arts (PSCA) is a 501(c) 3 and the first and only art center that serves Grant County in Eastern Oregon. Our mission is to advance arts education and entertainment, enhance the quality of life, and promote cultural development in Grant County. PSCA provides arts education and performances for youth and adults and offers classes in music, theater, writing, painting, drawing, leatherworking, and after-school programming.

PSCA has been selected as one of the 16 projects in the state by the Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon in the Cultural Resource Economic Fund slate, to acquire a multi-use permanent space in John Day to serve all Grant County residents and visitors with arts and culture offerings. Located next to the Kam Wah Chung State Heritage Site, this facility will provide year-round livability and economic benefits to the region.

Since its inception, PSCA has experienced unprecedented, exponential growth, and demand for programming has outpaced the available space. Larger and additional classrooms, office space, ADA-accessible bathrooms, a performance hall, and cultural exhibition space are desperately needed to meet community needs.

The timing for pursuing this project is excellent, as PSCA has solid leadership, a large volunteer base, and a supportive community. PSCA's future success in carrying out its mission depends on purchasing the 17,700-square-foot building, located at 116 NW Bridge Street in John Day, which has more than enough room to operate and help PSCA realize the vision of becoming an "arts and cultural" center.

Project Details

The CREF funds for this project will be used solely for the building acquisition. PSCA recently moved into the building and is renting classroom space to operate. PSCA can operate fully in 100% of the facility without renovation and will gain long-term financial stability with the significant rental income



generated by the three community partners that will share space and their mission with PSCA. With the new facility, the significant additional space and classrooms will also allow PSCA to serve twice the amount of community members.

PSCA's building acquisition will provide year-round economic benefits. PSCA will have the ability to increase the number of events and exhibitions hosted, market artists, classes, and workshops, and provide vibrant meeting and gathering spaces for community and business use. Additionally, the building acquisition will indirectly assist in raising revenue for local businesses, residents, and government agencies by attracting visitors and locals to downtown events and workshops.

According to a recent study, rural counties that are home to performing arts organizations experienced population growth three times higher than rural counties that lack performing arts institutions (Americans for the Arts 2017). The same study also states that rural counties that have performing arts organizations provide residents with higher incomes (up to \$6,000 higher) than are reported in rural counties who lack performing arts organizations

Art education also has positive mental and physical health impacts, particularly for at-risk youth (including the many low-income, at-risk youth we currently serve). For at-risk youth, art serves as an escape, therapy, empowerment, a source of community, and a pathway to a more creative future. Arts experiences can reduce the need for higher-cost interventions such as social work, emergency mental and physical healthcare, or justice system interventions and narrows the achievement gap between at-risk youth and more privileged students, in-turn, improving their later economic/professional gains (Catterall et al. 2012).

PSCA has already transformed the lives of so many people in Grant County. With this new facility centrally located in the hub of John Day, we will be able to engage with many more people and offer more services that will improve the quality of life for everyone in our frontier community in Eastern Oregon.

On behalf of Painted Sky Center for the Arts, and arts and cultural organizations across the state, **I ask you to support HB 2459 and HB 2498 and to fully fund these bills before the Oregon Legislature adjourns.** Thank you for your consideration and your service.

Respectfully,

Allison Field

Allison Field

Development Director

Painted Sky Center for the Arts

John Day, OR