



**Co-Chairs Senator Girod and Representative Holvey
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Capital Construction
Salem, Oregon. 97301**

RE: CREF Slate 2023-25

Dear Co-Chairs Girod, Holvey and Members of the Subcommittee:

My name is Allison Field and I am the Development Director for Painted Sky Center for the Arts (PSCA) in John Day. PSCA is requesting your support for the Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon's (CACO) entire Cultural Resource Economic Fund (CREF) Slate for the 2023-25 biennium. By supporting the entire CREF slate, you will be supporting a critical project in Grant County that serves in frontier, and significantly underrepresented communities. 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.

Through a very thorough process, PSCA has been selected as one of the 16 CREF projects in the state by the Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon to acquire a multi-use permanent space in John Day that will 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 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.

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

Painted Sky Center for the Arts
116 NW Bridge Street, Ste. 9
John Day, OR 97845
541-575-1335
paintedskycenter.com



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. We have received tremendous support for our project from our local community, leaders, and policymakers. We are very appreciative of the thorough selection process we went through to be selected by CACO's CREF committee.

On behalf of Painted Sky Center for the Arts, and arts and cultural organizations across the state, **we are asking the Committee to fund the entire \$11.88M slate of CACO's endorsed projects** and prioritize increased access and expansion of arts and culture in our communities.

Respectfully,

Allison Field

Allison Field

Development Director

Painted Sky Center for the Arts

Painted Sky Center for the Arts
116 NW Bridge Street, Ste. 9
John Day, OR 97845
541-575-1335
paintedskycenter.com