Submitter: Margaret Doherty

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Transportation and Economic Development

Measure: SB5524

Co-Chairs Woods and Gomberg and members of the Committee- Thank you for the opportunity to testify. For the record, my name is Margaret Doherty and I am here to support even more funding for the Arts in Oregon than is submitted in SB 5524.

Everyone was affected by the COVID shutdowns and all sectors are still working hard to get to pre-pandemic levels. A very important, but sometimes overlooked area that was tremendously effected was the arts community. Whether it be theater, music, art , historical societies, cultural venues, tribal communities, museums or historic sights, all were affected. T make matters worse, many arts and cultural organizations were also hurt by the historic wildfires we faced.

The overall state budget for the arts has not increased in the last 16 years, yet the services provided all 36 counties in Oregon has grown. Sadly, Oregon is 36th in the nation for the public funding for the arts, yet the variety and quality of the historic, artistic and cultural programs in Oregon has grown. All 36 counties in Oregon benefit from the Oregon Cultural Trust and the Oregon Arts Commission. The have even become an important tool and source of information for the local schools.

As a long time supporter of the arts, I would encourage this committee to add monies to the current proposal of $4,287,169. I would also encourage our vocal support for 3532 which allows Arts Program to use up to 5% of value of Trust for Cultural Development Account for certain administrative purposes. Oregon is so bless to have the Oregon Cultural Trust, thanks to tremendous work of the late Ben Westlund.

I thank you for the time to hear my testimony on increasing the suggested amounts for the arts. The arts affect local economies, highlight the local cultures and the role they have played in local areas and are crucial to the overall education of our students. They are also great entertainment!

Again, thank you for your time.