



Oregon Public Broadcasting
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February 9, 2024

Testimony to and in reference to:

Senate Committee on Labor and Business

RE: SB 1582, Cultural Resources Economic Development Fund

Dear Chair Taylor and Committee Members,

On behalf of the board and staff of Oregon Public Broadcasting, I strongly endorse the passage of Senate Bill 1582. SB 1582 will complete funding of the 2023 capital projects slate proposed for the Cultural Resources Economic Fund. During the last session, 14 statewide projects went unfunded. We urge you to correct this critical situation and support these important projects which will contribute deeply to Oregon's arts ecosystem and the wellbeing of our citizens.

Since policymakers established CREF over a decade ago and asked CACO to assist in overseeing a statewide process to recommend projects, it has provided huge benefits for our state's residents. Indeed, OPB benefited from a CREF award during our 2019-20 renovation project. In addition to boosting our arts and culture coverage, that project proved crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the many new studios allowed our staff to serve the public with critical information while staying safe in separate spaces.

SB 1582 also includes important resiliency funding for the arts and culture sector which was among those hardest hit by the global pandemic. From OPB's work covering the arts and culture sector in Oregon, we know the struggles facing organizations and artists working in these fields. While federal funding largely kept performing arts nonprofits afloat during COVID, audiences continue to return at a slow rate.

As the sector is pivoting to attracting new participants, a well-timed infusion of state funds will ensure the resiliency of our arts and culture providers. This bill will help right the ship for organizations that make our state a wonderful place to work, live, and travel.

Thank you for carefully considering this important bill, and helping support a strong recovery of the arts and culture sector in Oregon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steven M. Bass". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steven M. Bass
OPB President and CEO