



February 9, 2024

Oregon Legislature
House Committee on Economic Development & Small Business
Salem, Oregon

Toni Pimble
Artistic Director

Jennifer Martin
Associate Artistic Director

Suzanne Haag
Resident Choreographer

Sara Lombardi
Academy Director

Josh Neckels
Executive Director

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Toni Pimble

Jeanne Staton

Directors

Anne DeLaney

Rosaria Haugland

Sabrina Madison-Cannon

Advisory Board

Midtown Arts Center
174 East 16th Avenue
Eugene, OR 97401

541-485-3992
eugeneballet.org

RE: SB 1582

Dear Chair Taylor and Committee Members,

On behalf of Eugene Ballet, one of the leading professional residential ballet companies in the Pacific Northwest with a history of 45 years of service in Lane County and throughout Oregon, **we strongly encourage your vote and passage of SB 1582 and complete the funding of the 2023 capital projects included in the proposed Cultural Resources Economic Fund (CREF).**

Eugene Ballet's new facility, the Midtown Arts Center, is a direct and working example of the importance CREF funding has in the economic development of the Arts Sector. Our project created over one hundred jobs during the two-year construction, and now three years later, the Midtown Arts Center continues to support the operations of nine local arts groups who are all adding to their staff and programming. **SB 1582 will provide \$7.8 million for the current slate of fourteen capital construction projects** and will represent a critical opportunity for Oregon to continue its investment in the Arts Sector across the entire state.

In addition to these fourteen projects, passage of **SB 1582 will make a well-timed investment of \$19.6 million in the arts sector**, and continue Oregon's commitment to create a stronger, more "resilient" arts economy. An economic sector that grows with strategic intent, and elevates adjoining economic sectors, such as travel, tourism, hospitality, and engages local small businesses in the process.

Oregon's high-quality performances and experiences bring artistic recognition and financial resources to the State, expanding Oregon's influence as a great place to live, work, play and learn.

Thank you for your time, for your shared commitment to recognizing the economic development of the arts as core to the values of Oregon, and for your support in passage of SB 1582!

Josh Neckels
Executive Director