

Submitter: Christine Vernier
On Behalf Of: HD 3191
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

RE: Support for High Desert Museum's Capital Construction Project

Dear Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez and Committee Members:

I would like to express my strong support for the High Desert Museum's \$2 million Cultural Resource Economic Fund award request included in HB 3191, which is in the Joint Committee on Ways and Means. The High Desert Museum is a vital educational resource, a regional arts anchor, and a powerful economic driver, and the award will help fund an expansion to benefit all of Central and Eastern Oregon for generations to come.

I serve on the Board of the High Desert Museum and on the Campaign Committee. We have raised over \$30.5 million—76% of a \$40 million goal—for its first major expansion in nearly three decades. This project will add a state-of-the-art Learning Center; a dedicated art gallery, the only of its kind within 130 miles; and the renovation of the permanent exhibition dedicated to the Indigenous cultures of the High Desert Plateau, co-created with Native partners. The sum comes from private individuals, federal agencies and foundations.

Investing \$2 million included in HB 3191 or in HB 5006 would provide essential funding for the Museum to complete this expansion and continue serving a fast-growing, dynamic region. I urge you to support this investment in the future of the High Desert Museum and in arts and culture in Oregon.

Sincerely,
Christine Vernier