



February 14, 2025

Representative Nguyen, Chair  
Representatives Diehl and Isadore, Vice-Chairs  
House Committee on Economic Development, Small Business and Trade  
Oregon Legislature  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**RE: HB 3189, H 3190, HB 3191**

Dear Chair Nguyen, Vice Chairs Diehl and Isadore, and Committee Members,

Thank you for scheduling time to hear from leaders of Oregon's arts, culture, heritage and humanities organizations on February 17, 2025. I am pleased to add my support for HB 3189 and HB 3191 and HB 3190 and urge your positive consideration and adoption.

Raising the grants budget of the Oregon Arts Commission to \$10 million means double the amount of available resources for arts and culture across our state. For Caldera that means double the amount of unrestricted operating support that directly impacts more than 422 learners, per year, in the Portland Metro Area and Bend, Redmond, Sisters, Madras and Warm Springs.

That means inspiring and supporting young people from underserved rural and urban communities by awakening their creative voice. Awakening creative voice is a leading indicator of a flourishing human being resulting in the five C's: competence, confidence, character, connection and caring which leads to the sixth "c" - contributing to family, school and society. That is the power of creativity. That is the power of connected arts learning and that is why Caldera is asking you to double the impact for Caldera learners by doubling the funding for the Oregon Arts Commission. (HB 3189)

Thank you also for supporting a \$9.3 million capital investment in our arts and cultural infrastructure, statewide. When you support these "ready" projects to have long term access to land, obtain necessary permits and approvals for projects and leverage funds from outside the state, you are making an investment that *raises all boats*. For Caldera, that means investing in projects in Warm Springs and Portland which add resources to the overall arts and culture ecosystem that inspires and supports Caldera learners, as they awaken their creative voice. (HB 3191)

When you consider the funding priorities of the arts and culture sector, consider that when the entire ecosystem thrives that individual artists, organizations and administrators also thrive. This means when our large arts organizations, which are ecosystem anchors, thrive, then there is tourism, there is traded sector growth, there are businesses that rush to locate here, because we have a thriving arts and culture sector - from museums to rodeos, from opera to foundries, from five star international airports that are "*a love letter to the local*" to the very makers and crafters who call this state home. It is all interconnected. It all builds upon each other.

Without the State of Oregon upholding its part of the partnership to match private funding from The Oregon Community Foundation and the James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation, the anchoring organizations will continue to struggle. When they struggle, the entire ecosystem and mid-size organizations like Caldera struggle to stay relevant and impactful - teaching artists leave the community, youth see that nobody supports the arts, which translates to young people as *nobody supports my creativity* and without creativity society suffers from lack of heart, innovation, and purpose.

Finally, just as crucial to the ecosystem - our cultural treasures - that keep people in Oregon and continue to draw people to Oregon - to live and visit and spend money. Please reauthorize Oregon's longtime special assessment for historic properties program and the highly effective Main Street Program. If you haven't stepped into a historic theatre in Coos Bay, or visited the Bush House in Salem, or walked down mainstreet in Echo, then you haven't experienced the power of maintaining our cultural heritage in the built environment. It is powerful and it demonstrates to the next generation that we value our past in order to imagine our future. (HB 3190)

We urge your positive action on these bills which will better position arts, culture, heritage and humanities in Oregon and allow us to preserve our treasures and innovate for the future because arts and culture are a critical part of the state infrastructure.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Kimberly Howard Wade  
Executive Director, Caldera  
Board Member, CACO

P.S. Happy Birthday, Oregon!