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November 29, 2022

The Honorable Jeffrey A. Merkley
Chairman
Senate Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Merkley,

We write to you as Oregon arts and cultural organizations during a critical time when you will be embarking on conference negotiations to finalize the FY '23 appropriations for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. **We respectfully urge you and your Senate colleagues to accept the House-approved level of \$207 million each.**

While many other parts of the economy may have recovered, the arts economy has not experienced an even or steady recovery. Between 2019 and 2020, the U.S. arts and culture economy shrank 6.4%, nearly twice the rate as the national economy as a whole, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. **The negative economic impact on Oregon's arts and culture was even higher at 7%. The specific loss on arts and culture jobs in Oregon dropped by 12%, decreasing from 69,371 to 60,994 jobs.**

In the past 5 years, The NEA distributed more than \$8,899,911 in grants in Oregon. In one year alone, the arts and cultural production in Oregon added 3.6% or \$9.1 billion to the state's economy. NEA funding is critical for small and medium-sized organizations in the state.

As not all parts of the arts sector have returned to pre-pandemic levels, we respectfully urge you to support funding for the NEA and NEH at \$207 million each. This would be an important step toward full funding of these federal cultural agencies at \$331 million, or \$1 per capita.

The NEA funds an average 2,400 grants in every Congressional District in the country. Most grants go to small and medium-sized organizations (budgets less than \$2 million), which tend to support projects that benefit audiences that otherwise might not have access to arts programming. NEA grants in Oregon range from the High Desert Museum in Bend to the Regional Arts & Culture Council in Portland.

Investing in the arts strengthens our economy and the social fabric of our communities.

The ratio of private and other public funds matching every NEA grant dollar will approach 9:1, far surpassing the required non-federal match of at least 1:1. This generated more than \$500 million in matching support and illustrates why federal support for the arts is uniquely valuable – not only does it strengthen our economy but it can ensure access to the arts, as a significant percentage of the grants fund programs in high-poverty communities throughout the country.

The NEA and NEH play a vital role in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Organization	City
Albany Civic Theater, Inc.	Albany
Aloha Oregon Historical Society	Aloha
American Federation of Musicians, Local 99	Portland
Art at the Heart	Salem
ArtCity Oregon	Eugene
Artists Repertory Theatre	Portland
Arts Council of Clatsop County	Astoria
Asante Riverwind Arts	Eugene
Association of Performing Arts Professionals	Washington
Bag&Baggage Productions	Hillsboro
Beaverton Art Commission	Beaverton
Beaverton Community Band	Beaverton
Caldera Arts	Portland
Center for Contemporary Art & Culture at PNCA	Portland
Central Oregon Center for the Arts	Bend
Chamber Music Northwest	Portland
City of Portland Arts Program	Portland
Coalescence Dance	Dexter
Corvallis Multicultural Literacy Center	Corvallis
Cottage Theatre	Cottage Grove
Creative Streets	Portland

Crossword Carnegie Art Center	Baker City
CTUIR Culture Coalition	Pendleton
Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon	Portland
Dana Thompson Memorial Fund of Awesome	Portland
DJ Anjali & The Incredible Kid	Portland
Eco Murals	Eugene
Erth Now	Eugene
Eugene Ballet	Eugene
Eugene Opera	Eugene
Eugene Symphony Association	Eugene
Fishtrap	Enterprise
Friends of William Stafford	Sisters
Gibson Arts	Eugene
Gilbert House Children's Museum	Salem
Healthy Moves	Eugene
Heather John Jewelry	Portland
Heidi Duckler Dance Northwest	Portland
High Desert Museum	Bend
Hillsboro Artiststic Regional Theatre	Hillsboro
Jan Lintz Studio	Eugene
Japanese American Museum of Oregon	Portland
Kickstand Comedy	Portland
Koss Arts	Eugene
Lake Oswego Millennium Concert Band	Lake Oswego
Lan Su Chinese Garden	Portland
Lane Arts Council	Eugene

Little Ballet Theatre Inc.	Astoria Oregon
Little Theatre on the Bay	North Bend
Maude Kerns Art Center	Eugene
MEPAA	Eugene
Milagro	Portland
Nicholas Moler-Gallardo	Portland
NW Dance Project	Portland
Oregon Arts Commission	Salem
Oregon Coast Council for the Arts	Newport
Oregon Folklife Network	Eugene
Oregon Humanities	Portland
Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education	Portland
Oregon Shakespeare Festival	Ashland
Original Practice Shakespeare Festival	Portland
OSLP Arts & Culture Center	Eugene
Outside the Frame	Portland
PHAME Academy	Portland
Play It Forward	Portland
Portland Art Museum	Portland
Portland Center Stage	Portland
Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA)	Portland
Portland Opera	Portland
Portland Playhouse	Portland
Portland Street Art Alliance	Portland
Portland Youth Philharmonic	Portland
Portland'5 Centers for the Arts	Portland
Portland'5 Centers for the Arts Foundation	Portland
Regional Arts & Culture Council	Portland
Restore Oregon	Portland

Salem Art Association	Salem
Salem Multicultural Institute/World Beat Gallery & Festival	Salem
Sawmill Ballroom Publishing	Eugene
Sisters Arts Association	Sisters
Sisters Folk Festival Inc.	Sisters
Sitka Center for Art and Ecology	Otis
STAGES Performing Arts Youth Academy	Hillsboro
Susan Detroy, Artists	Eugene
Tate Art Committee, Laurel Fisher Gallery	Eugene
The Eugene Gleemen	Eugene
The Independent Dance Project	Portland
The John G. Shedd Institute for the Arts	Eugene
The Rogue Theatre	Grants Pass
Tualatin Valley Creates	Beaverton
Tumalo Art Co.	Bend
Vibe of Portland	Portland
White Bird	Portland
XRAY.FM	Portland