

From: Chris Coleman
To: [JWMTR Exhibits](#)
Subject: HB5025
Date: Tuesday, April 18, 2017 7:18:48 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
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Dear Ways and Means Subcommittee Members:

As President of the Cultural Advocacy Coalition, as well as Artistic Director of Portland Center Stage at The Armory, I am writing to urge you to oppose the current recommended budget for the Oregon Arts Commission for FY17-19 and to instead support restored funding for the OAC.

The arts play a vital role in communities throughout Oregon, not only affecting our quality of life, but also youth development, tourism, health and safety issues, and economic development. According to the most recent Arts & Economic Prosperity survey (<http://bit.ly/2oSMAank>), arts organizations **in the greater Portland area alone** generate nearly 5,400 FTEs and over \$10.3 million in revenue to state government – more than 2-1/2 times the Oregon Arts Commission’s entire FY15-17 budget.

The proposed cuts to the OAC’s budget will have a direct impact on organizations throughout the state, and on the hundreds of thousands people they serve. Here at The Armory, operating support grants from the Oregon Arts Commission help sustain our artistic programming, including stage productions that draw more than 120,000 playgoers annually. Arts Learning grants from the OAC play an even more important role, helping PCS give 8,000-9,000 young people each year opportunities to experience live theater performances with free/low-cost tickets and to learn new perspectives and skills through free in-school residencies, free workshops, and more.

I understand that you will be asked to make difficult choices in the coming months to address our state’s financial situation. Oregon, however, already ranks 33rd in the U.S. in per capita arts funding. In an economy that increasingly requires the creative thinking that the arts help inspire, we can ill afford to lose more support for our state’s arts community.

Thank you for your time and attention. Again, I hope that you will support the restoration of funding to Oregon Arts Commission’s budget, and I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue further with you.

Sincerely,

Chris Coleman
Artistic Director, Portland Center Stage at The Armory
President, Cultural Advocacy Coalition

Chris Coleman

Artistic Director
Portland Center Stage at The Armory
128 NW 11th Avenue
Portland, OR 97209
503/445-3842

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[Wild and Reckless: A New Concert Event with Blitzen Trapper](#) on the U.S. Bank Main Stage. **March 16 – April 30, 2017.**

[Lauren Weedman Doesn't Live Here Anymore](#) on the U.S. Bank Main Stage. **March 17 – April 30, 2017.**

[Mary's Wedding](#) in the Ellyn Bye Studio. **April 15 – May 28, 2017.**

