



PRESS RELEASE HOUSE MAJORITY OFFICE

For Immediate Release

December 19, 2022

Press Contact:

Hannah Kurowski, House Majority Office
hannah.kurowski@oregonlegislature.gov

Legislators Encourage Oregonians to Support Local Performing Arts Venues for the Holidays

Attending a performance at a local venue this holiday season can help bring culture, community, and economic vitality to Oregon's town centers.

SALEM, Ore. - The performing arts is an important part of Oregon's economy, responsible for over [22,000 full time jobs](#) that generate more than [\\$469 million in household income](#). But during the COVID-19 pandemic, arts, culture, concert and entertainment venues [took a tremendous hit](#) and were the first to close and last to open. The sector has yet to fully recover, with attendance still down 30% across the board.

Now, legislators are encouraging Oregonians to consider attending or gifting tickets to events at local venues during the holiday season to help support the many small businesses that bring culture, community, and economic vitality to Oregon's town centers.

"Gifting tickets, supporting with a membership, or simply attending a concert or show at your local venue this holiday season is a great way we can come together as a community and support Oregon's economy," said [Representative Janelle Bynum](#) (D-Clackamas), who chairs the House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business. "From Ashland's Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Elgin Opera House, and the Thalden Pavilion in Southern Oregon to the Lincoln City Cultural Center on the coast and Portland's own LaurelThirst Public House, Oregon's arts and culture industry has so much to offer."

"Oregon's venues were closed longer than any other state during the pandemic," said [Representative John Lively](#) (D-Springfield). "After a tough past couple of years, we can show support and bolster our local economies by attending a show with our families and friends."

In 2021, legislators passed \$50 million in American Rescue Plan Act dollars for venues hardest hit by the pandemic. In 2020, the sector received \$50 million in funds from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act's (CARE) Coronavirus Relief Fund

(CRF) moved forward by the Emergency Board. In 2023, lawmakers will continue to consider ways to bolster the industry.

“Arts and culture are pivotal to our communities, helping to bridge cultural and political divides and encouraging expression and civic engagement,” said [Representative Rob Nosse](#) (D-Portland). “The pandemic has isolated so many of us, but now we can come together and start to heal and find community again.”

Due to a rise in COVID-19 and RSV cases, the Oregon Health Authority [recommends that individuals mask up](#) when indoors or in crowded areas to protect children and at-risk individuals.

###