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**Oregon Arts and Culture Caucus expands to 23 members!
14 more Legislators join since Caucus established**

Salem, Oregon – Inspired by the energy and enthusiasm created by the launch of the Oregon Arts and Culture Caucus, 14 more Oregon Legislators have now joined the Caucus – increasing membership to 23 and making it one of Oregon’s largest bipartisan caucuses. [Watch a highlight video](#) of the Feb. 27 Arts and Culture Caucus Launch Event at Salem’s Elsinore Theatre, which drew more than 350 arts and culture enthusiasts.

In the days leading up to the Launch Event, four additional Legislators joined: Rep. Dacia Grayber (D-Southwest Portland/East Beaverton); Rep. Annessa Hartman (D-Gladstone/Oregon City/North Clackamas County); Rep. Lisa Reynolds (D-Northeast Washington County); and Rep. Ricki Ruiz, (D-Gresham). Following the rousing success of the Launch Event, another 10 Legislators signed up: Rep. Ben Bowman (D-Tigard/Metzger/South Beaverton); Sen. Michael Dembrow (D-Portland); Sen. Lew Frederick (D-North/Northeast Portland); Rep. Emerson Levy (D-Bend/South Redmond/Tumalo/Sisters); Sen. James Manning Jr.(D-North Eugene/West Eugene/Veneta); Rep. Kevin Mannix (R-Keizer/North Salem); Sen. Mark Meek (D- Clackamas County); Rep. Daniel Nguyen (D-Lake Oswego/Southwest Portland); Rep. Hoa Nguyen (D-East Portland/Damascus); and Rep. Thuy Tran (D-Northeast Portland).

“The interest in this Caucus, and its rapid growth, just show how much people value the arts and culture organizations in Oregon and how important it is that we support this sector,” said Rep. Nosse (D-Portland), Caucus coordinator.

The Arts and Culture Caucus was formed in recognition of the vital role arts and culture play in the livability and prosperity of Oregon communities – and in enriching the lives of Oregonians. Formation of the Caucus was led by the Oregon Arts Commission.

Inaugural members of the Caucus include Sen. Dick Anderson (R-Lincoln City); Rep. Janelle Bynum (D-Clackamas); Rep. Maxine Dexter (D-Portland); Rep. David Gomberg (D-Otis); Sen. Bill Hansell (R-Athena); Rep. John Lively (D-Springfield); Rep. Pam Marsh (D-Ashland); Caucus Coordinator Rep. Nosse (D-Portland); and Sen. Deb Patterson (D-Salem).

“Arts and culture are so important to Oregon,” said Rep. Nosse. “All around our state, every day there are concerts, comedy events, public hearings, podcasts, theatrical performances, debates and community events that bring the people of our state together. We must support the cultural and community hubs in our neighborhoods and I hope this caucus will continue to ensure arts and culture thrive in this state.”

The Caucus serves as a resource to the Oregon Legislature on key issues impacting the arts and culture sector. Its members work closely with stakeholders including the Oregon Arts Commission, the Oregon Cultural Trust (and its Statewide Partners) and the Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon to stay informed on the latest research and issues. It also sets the agenda on priorities for arts and culture legislation, including a sustainable and robust funding mechanism for arts and cultural initiatives.

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