John Lively, State Representative  
Chair of Small Business Work Group

Re: Emergency Board Request for Coronavirus Relief Funds for Entertainment and Performance Venues

Honorable Chair Lively and Committee Members,

Thank you for your time and work during this unprecedented time. Last year, the Liberty Theatre in Astoria, Oregon, welcomed 17,000 people through our doors. We invite patrons of all ages to our educational outreach programs, musical and theatrical performances, and our community gathering spaces. We regularly partner with our local restaurants, bars, and hotels because we know if you want people to drive two hours to see your show, you need to help them find a place to stay and eat. These partnerships result in an economic impact of almost $1,000,000 annually to our rural community.

The Liberty has led Astoria through recovery twice in our history. Among the first to open after the devastating 1922 fire, and the first to renovate in the late 90s, Senator Betsy Johnson has said “the restoration of the Liberty Theatre was the spark plug that changed downtown’s prospects.” During COVID-19 closures we have been unable to hold events, resulting in an almost $400,000 loss of income. Even still, we are committed to our community. In April, the Liberty adopted a temporary mission to be a catalyst for the performing arts in our county. With 17 organizations under our wing, the Liberty is poised to once again lead the recovery and revitalization of Astoria.

We could not do this without the support of our community. Rallying around us, our leadership, donors, and neighbors have raised almost $40,000 to help maintain our 33,000 square foot historic building while we are unable to earn income. State of Oregon has also been very generous to the Liberty over the years. You’ve funded our projects and our growth, and now we need your help to survive.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Crockett
Executive Director
The Liberty Theatre of Astoria, Oregon