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This testimony is in support of LD 1566 and the provision for funding to support artists, arts organizations and performance venues in Maine who have been impacted by COVID-19. I am contributing this testimony in support of LD 1566 because I believe that we as community very much need to support arts and cultural practitioners during this period of financial instability caused by the pandemic. Put simply, we as community need the arts. Art is beauty, technique, vision, recognition, emotional grounding and spiritual opening, astonishment, joy, freedom, introspection and inspiration. Performance is a moment of feeling connection and an opportunity to return to that moment in memory. Live performance is a conversation of risk, trust and bravery that we are all enriched by sharing. The individuals, organizations and venues that have – and continue to – struggle to make and share performance, public art and beauty during this very difficult period deserve additional public support for what they continue to offer to community here in Maine.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this written testimony in support of LD 1566.