

Aimee Petrin
Portland Oventions

Dear IDEA Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to give testimony in support of LD 1566 (Emergency) Resolve, Directing the Department of Economic and Community Development To Create and Administer a Fund for Live Entertainment Venue, Performer and Worker and Public Art Recovery Grants. I am grateful to Representative Collings of Portland; Senators Baldacci of Penobscot, Hickman of Kennebec and Maxmin of Lincoln; and Representatives Dodge of Belfast, Landry of Farmington, Roberts of South Berwick, Roeder of Bangor, Sachs of Freeport, and Talbot Ross of Portland for their leadership and support.

Portland Oventions – a Maine-based non-profit cultural organization celebrating its 90th year – is deeply and irrevocably impacted by the pandemic since ceasing normal operations on March 12, 2020.

In a typical year, Portland Oventions operates at a \$2.5 annual budget with 9 employees serving 40,000+ people through more than 100 live arts events. Since March 2020, we've had to freeze, furlough and reduce hours for our employees; give up our office space; and pivot operations to a reduced portfolio of digital programs. Year over year, we've lost more than 70% of our revenue. Further relief funding is crucial to our very existence and our ability to continue to deliver our mission of supporting the cultural, social and economic wellbeing of our communities.

We are not alone and represent one of many 1000's of non-profit arts organizations, concert promoters, venue operators and other cultural workers fighting to survive in the live entertainment industry here in Maine.

Thank you for your support of the arts and entertainment sector during this critical time. Now more than ever, we need to be able to promise our communities the joy, beauty, contemplation, healing and economic catalyzing that only the arts provide.

Gratefully,
Aimée M. Petrin
Executive & Artistic Director
Portland Oventions