



ORPHEUM

EST. 1922

March 10, 2025

From:

Name: Stacey Olden, Executive Director

Bill: # SB 277

Position: IN SUPPORT, Written

To: Chairman, Representative Adam Smith and the Members of the House Committee on Taxation

Subject: On behalf of our Board of Directors, I'm writing testimony in support of SB 227, the State Tax Credit Incentive for Historic Preservation

Good afternoon, Members of the House Committee on Taxation:

I'm writing on behalf of our 15-member Board of Directors for the 501c3 Non profit, the Orpheum Performing Arts Centre, LTD (OPAC), that owns the Orpheum Theatre in Wichita, Kansas. The Orpheum Theatre is 102 years old and is on the national, state and local historic registries. OPAC has been in service since the theatre was saved from demolition in 1984 and has brought the theatre back to successful operations to date. What remains is the restoration and preservation of the structure.

We are preparing design development plans for a restoration project and the importance of the historic tax credits is critical to make this possible.

The Orpheum Theatre is a significant part of economic impact and drive for downtown Wichita. It is imperative to our local entertainment and attractions infrastructure. Many of our corporate sponsors participate because of the quality of life that the venue holds to the success of their employee recruitment and retainment. We are a part of many incredible local events including the Tallgrass Film Festival, the Wichita Jazz Festival and our very own Anniversary Film Series. We enjoy partnering with other non-profit events when possible. In order to continue bringing in national touring acts and our local arts and culture entertainment, we must improve and enhance the building that has many areas of concern for repair and improvement. Not just visually but infrastructure and patron comfort and experience such as seating is important as well.

The cultural and historical significance of this historic theatre is crucial to downtown Wichita, and the region. It is a crown jewel and holds memories from many generations. Many national touring acts that go to Tulsa, OK, Oklahoma City, OK, Saint Louis, MO and Kansas City, add shows in Wichita as well. We

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want to maintain our importance on the touring routes to continue to leverage our importance to national popular acts as well which help ticket sales and revenue.

Downtown Wichita is growing quickly with major hotels coming downtown, schools like the BIO Med campus just 3 blocks away set to open in 2026. There is hub of activity happening and the Orpheum Theatre needs to keep up with the growth and appeal.

It is because of the historic tax credits that large multi-million dollar projects are made possible and critical for the success. It will increase the value and drive of the downtown area specifically, but the outreach is felt through the city and state of Kansas.

We urge you to vote for SB 227 and increase to 40% for non-profit organizations. Thank you for your consideration to this important increase in historic improvements.

Thank you,
Stacey Olden
Executive Director

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