



NORTH DAKOTA BALLET COMPANY

3/25/21

Dear Senate Appropriations Committee,

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the North Dakota Ballet Company & Academy (NDBC) as the Executive Director. NDBC has proudly been the state ballet for North Dakota beginning in 1962. We have been serving the Greater Grand Forks region and surrounding areas in dance education and performance for nearly 60 years!

As many businesses have struggled this past year through the COVID-19 Pandemic, the arts also took a substantial hit with the inability to hold in-person programming for a period of time, and cancellation of shows and programs. As an organization we had to be innovative to continue to operate safely, and provide the much needed outlet of the arts to assist in overall emotional and social wellness for our dancers and community.

NDBC worked diligently to develop virtual instruction opportunities, as well as adapted to hybrid models throughout the season. For our productions we became innovative with digitally produced shows, still engaging audiences and providing performance opportunities for our dancers. Through these efforts we were able to provide some normalcy during challenging times, and also reach audiences from around the world!

These efforts would not have been possible without the support of NDCA, along with their institutional support. This has allowed us to continue operations, invest in digital resources, and incur new expenses in producing fully digital shows.

We highly support NDCA to receive any additional reallocation of unspent Coronavirus Relief Fund moneys. Additional funds will assist us as we continue to navigate these times as arts organizations and need additional resources to produce new virtual streamed and hybrid models with our programming and performances.

With Gratitude,

Laura Arneson
Executive Director
North Dakota Ballet Company & Academy