

SALINA COMMUNITY THEATRE SALES TAX RELIEF REQUEST HB 2098

Salina Community Theatre (SCT) was created 65 years ago with one employee, no home, and produced four plays in its first season. SCT has evolved since then with seven full-time, and three part-time artists who work with over 400 volunteers annually to create fourteen productions. This includes seven mainstage subscription shows in two theatres, four youth productions, an original choreography show, and one additional show each season.

In the past 25 years, our audiences have grown to include patrons from more than 135 communities in Kansas as well as 25 other states. In the past decade, SCT has grown its out-of-county patronage from 30% of total sales to over 40%.

Each year, more than 90% of every dollar that comes into our theatre is spent in the local economy. Salina Community Theatre is also an economic engine for the local economy, having generated more than \$9 million and more than \$305,000 in sales tax revenue in the past decade (which we will continue to harvest).

SCT not only produces high quality live theatre using local resources, but it also educates students through classes in the theatre arts. SCT has more than 375 student registrations this year in a wide variety of disciplines. Our alumni are currently working professionally on Broadway, in national tours of Chicago and Michael Jackson, the Musical, at Disney World, Universal Studios, and a variety of regional theatres.

SCT is governed by a Board of Directors who are volunteers from the community. Because this is a governance Board, we endeavor to have a number of skill sets represented on the Board: legal, accounting, banking, real estate, insurance. Each of seven committees is currently chaired by a member of the Board. Board members are nominated, interviewed, and elected to the Board for a three-year term.

Salina Community Theatre has a staff of seven full-time and two part-time personnel. Additionally, we contract with more than 135 directors, choreographers, musical directors, and musicians each season. All of them live in central Kansas.

Salina Community Theatre invests every dollar earned or donated into production and education. Every set is constructed in our scene shop. Every costume is designed, cut, altered, and stitched in our costume shop. Each bit of original marketing is created by a local graphic artist. Directors, musical directors, choreographers, and musicians are local artists living in Saline and surrounding counties.

All savings realized through sales tax relief will remain in the local economic ecosystem. Patrons from Salina and Saline County regularly have "date night" with dinner and a show. Out-of-town patrons dine, buy gas, and use local hotels for every production we do. Our patrons also generate income and tax revenue by shopping and buying gas. They also created more than 400

overnight stays at local hotels, generating further revenue and tax. Therefore, all savings realized from this bill will be reinvested into production and personnel.

Apart from the rare guest artist, we do not contract with acts for fees that migrate out of the local economy. Theatres that create their own product are ultimately the most effective investment because a far higher percentage of income remains local in Kansas. Theatres that educate local students have a more resonant impact on their communities over a longer period than organizations that do not create. SCT currently has alumni working on Broadway (THE GREAT GATSBY, HADESTOWN), on national tours (CHICAGO), working in regional theatres as well as at Walt Disney World and Universal Studios.

On behalf of the students, volunteers, Board, and community, we respectfully request your strongest consideration for this measure.

Michael Spicer
Executive Director
Salina Community Theatre