

Mister Chairman, members of the committee, for the record my name is Charlene Campbell, I am the artistic director of Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre in Missoula. I am testifying on behalf of grant number 1283 requesting funding for an operational support grant for Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre.

At this time, RMBT is preparing to represent the state of Montana in China the summer of 2008. Through Sen. Max Baucus and the Senate Finance Committee, we have received an invitation from the China Arts and Entertainment Group to perform on a Chinese government sponsored tour of 8 cities throughout China during the Olympic summer of 2008. We will be taking 15, "made in Montana" 14 to 18 year old dancers on this diplomatic cultural exchange. Our Chinese government sponsors are eager to cultivate cultural ties with Montana as they continue to do business with our state. This project involves the assistance and support of the U.S. Embassy to China as well as other government agencies, and is considered a truly ambassadorial experience to promote goodwill and understanding between cultures. The fact that it occurs during an Olympic year only adds to the excitement and prestige of this opportunity.

Funds from the Montana Cultural Trust help insure that Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre can continue to offer programming and training throughout Montana, and to continue with projects such as our China tour.

Thank you.