

Good morning committee members. My name is Bill Foisy, spelled BILL FOISY. I serve on the Governance Committee for the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation and am on the Roosevelt Center Steering Committee. I was also a member of the Red Lodge City Council when Red Lodge joined the Montana Mainstreet Program as mainstreet funds have helped to fund multiple projects at the Roosevelt Center.

I would like to share how Montana Historic Preservation funds would benefit Red Lodge, Carbon County and the State.

Former U.S. Senator Tom Udall who co-sponsored the Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act was asked how best to advocate for the arts in the current environment: He said to “Start by telling every one of your Senators about the economic benefits of the arts.”

According to American for the Arts, Arts are the fourth largest driver of decisions made when planning a trip. We believe that many visitors to Red Lodge and the surrounding area come for the thriving art scene.

For the Roosevelt Center, a potential of \$7.4 million in gross economic output, \$3.1 in gross county product, \$2.1 million in total labor income, 75 jobs (full and part-time, including construction), \$675,085 in capital income and \$279,126 in indirect business taxes and fees are documented in the ‘Economic Impact Analysis, Revitalizing the Old Roosevelt, 2015’, prepared by Northwestern Energy/Solution Management Inc.

The Red Lodge Area Community Foundation bought the building in 2017 to provide a performing arts and conference center for use by the community, various organizations, and tourists. We have succeeded in creating a space that is a growing economic driver by filling the Roosevelt Center with artists’ and musicians’ studios and showcasing local Montana artists through outdoor sculptures and indoor gallery space. Our studio space is currently at allowable capacity. With additional funding from this grant, we would be able to complete needed updates to the building, including updated and energy efficient windows and exterior improvements. This will allow us to continue to grow. With help, we can:

- Increase tourism is to provide additional activities so that visitors will extend their stay. A study prepared by the Institute of Tourism and Recreation Research (ITTR) in 2014 showed visitors typically spent under 2.5 days in Red Lodge. By providing additional concerts, music and art events, the community can extend visitors stays, bringing in additional tourism dollars.
- The Red Lodge economy is tourism based. Over 26% of Red Lodge jobs are in the service industry. Increased tourism and visitation will increase the local economy through new jobs, new wealth for local business owners and greater spending by new employees and new businesses.
- We can become more of a destination for conferences and special events, especially during the slower shoulder seasons. This will help create higher paying jobs, convert seasonal jobs to permanent fulltime jobs, and help move more of our local workforce into higher paying jobs.

- The Roosevelt Center satisfies the need for larger scale convention and meeting space, identified as a top priority issue in the Downtown Plan. Projects in the secondary area adjacent to the central business district, to include the Old Roosevelt School, are important for the economic health of downtown as multiuse space for performing arts and mid-sized convention space with break-out rooms are needed that will support, not replace, commercial activities in the downtown area.

The preservation of this historic building is important to our community and support from the Montana legislature can make this happen.

Thank you again for your time.