

ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.  
PENNSYLVANIA

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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 2, 2022

The Honorable Gayle Manchin  
Federal Co-Chair  
Appalachian Regional Commission  
16666 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20009

The Honorable Brandon McBride  
Executive Director  
Appalachian Regional Commission  
16666 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Co-Chair Manchin and Executive Director McBride:

I write in support of the application submitted by the City of Oil City, The Colonel Drake Cultural Alliance, Inc. (CDCA) and Community Playhouse, Inc. (CPI), for ARC Area Development funding to restore the grandeur of the historic Lyric Theatre building in Oil City, Pennsylvania. The purpose of this letter is to urge you to give full and fair consideration to this proposal.

As you are aware, equity is a core value of the Biden Administration's Interagency Working Group (IWG) on Coal and Power Plant Communities and Economic Revitalization. Oil City is an Appalachian community that has long-suffered the devastating impacts of losing its legacy energy industry and a community ripe for reinvestment. I am told that the city is reinventing itself as a hub of arts, entertainment and recreation and it is my understanding that the Lyric Theatre would provide a strong downtown anchor in the city for performances, movies and community events.

I am informed that the applicants seek \$500,000 in ARC Area Development funding to restore the theater. The applicants state that, once fully restored to its original grandeur, the Lyric Theatre is anticipated to serve 5,580 patrons on an annual basis, which will generate over \$104,000 per year in indirect spending at Venango County's shops, restaurants, lodging venues and other establishments. The spending generated by the 214-seat facility will greatly assist the City of Oil City and Venango County in transitioning away from an energy-dependent economy by promoting cultural resource-oriented tourism.

Since the building was acquired in 2001, the CDCA and CPI have diligently worked to restore the Lyric Theatre to its former glory largely through the generous donations of local businesses and individuals. I am told that the Lyric Theatre Rehabilitation Project is a shovel-ready initiative that will provide immediate investment in Oil City's future.

Thank you in advance for consideration of my views. Please include this letter in the official record of the application. Consistent with applicable laws, rules and regulations, I also respectfully request that you keep me informed of the status of this grant application. Finally, if you have any questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to contact me or my staff at (202) 224-6851.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Casey". The signature is written in a cursive style and is contained within a thin black rectangular border.

Bob Casey  
United States Senator