

Good morning and thank you for allowing me this time. Again, we are grateful for this grant and appreciate your work in supporting the arts in Ventura County. My name is Cindy Murray, I am the Executive Director of 5-Star Theatricals, the resident musical theatre at the Bank of America Performing Arts Center in Thousand Oaks. 5-Star Theatricals, formerly named Cabrillo Music Theatre, became a non-profit organization in 1986. We initially began performing in Oxnard in the 1950s as a symphony/ballet and musical theatre organization. **Annually**, we employ approximately 300-400 cast/crew and staff, have 27-30 performances per year, entertain 15,000+ audience members and through our community outreach programs have served over 40,000 community members.

What brings me here today, along with other arts organizations, is to have our voices heard and our disappointment expressed regarding the process distribution of the \$1million art grant on November 7th, 2023. I have with me a packet of letters and signatures from various arts organizations for your review that I left at the front.

Unfortunately, we were not made aware that we could lobby nor apply for this grant before it was presented to the BOS by the new Arts and Culture Manager. The tiered proposal that Mr. Yoshitomi presented seemed to be fair and equitable for all 300 arts organizations, however, before it was voted on, it was suggested that a “slight” amendment be made. That amendment was to award two organizations \$250k each. A brief description of each organization was presented by two Supervisors, a vote was called and it passed 5-0.

The hope and goal today is that you consider this grant be made whole again allowing all arts and culture organizations to take part in a transparent and equitable application process. Our collective goal should be to build a thriving arts/culture community together, fairly. We look forward to an open dialog and conversation going forward.

