

Connecticut Arts Alliance
2017 POSITION STATEMENT
PERSPECTIVE ON the STATE BUDGET and the OFFICE OF THE ARTS

May 2 Call to Action:

Contact your legislators in the Appropriations Committee and request:

- Support maintaining total arts funding of \$5,183,087 (less than .02% of proposed budget)
- Fund State "Arts Commission" (Connecticut Office of the Arts) which will leverage Federal NEA matching funds.

Activate constituents on social media to support arts funding – use #CTArtsMatter

Background Information and Supporting Data

Significant deductions in arts funding over the past ten years (**over 50% in cuts from 2008 to 2017**) have weakened the State's cultural capacity and caused organizations to close, as well as eliminate jobs and programs. Continued reductions to arts funding will further weaken the State's cultural capacity at a time when it is most essential for near-term statewide economic recovery. Decreasing funding will cause further loss of jobs and programs at a time when cultural assets are critical tools to help protect the quality-of-life safety net, provide critical educational support for public schools, strengthen tourism in the face of increased out-of-state competition, and attract new innovative businesses and jobs.

Any further cuts in funding to the Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA) will jeopardize the amount of Federal National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) funds that Connecticut is eligible to receive.

- **Over 22 million people per year** experience Connecticut's cultural attractions.
- The arts and culture sector generates **\$3.8 billion in gross state product** annually.
- There is a **1 to 7 multiplier** for every dollar arts organizations receive from state funding
- Like for-profit entities, these organizations maximize limited resources to sustain and grow operations. Yet, **they are rooted in Connecticut's communities** and will not relocate to take advantage of more desirable business incentives.
- **66.9% out of state visitors** say that cultural attractions are the primary reason for their visit.
- Students involved with arts programs **are three times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement**, high attendance, and participation in a math or science fair, **and low-income students in arts programs are four times more likely to excel in these areas.**
- Connecticut's arts and cultural organizations employ **40,000 people in 18,314 full-time equivalent jobs.**

State Budget Recommendations:

To best support the social, cultural, educational and economic revitalization of Connecticut moving forward, the Board of CAA urges the General Assembly and the Administration to consider the following recommendations regarding the State Budget:

1. Restore, over time, the total state arts funding to the levels of 2008 (\$10,000,000) and to currently support total state arts funding at \$5,183,087. This total prevents further cuts to the funding for arts and heritage line item organizations, as well as supports the Governor's proposed increase of \$554,217 to the Office of the Arts ("Arts Commission" line in the budget). This total also represents less than .02 % of the proposed State budget total.

2. Support the Connecticut Office of the Arts (listed as “Arts Commission”) and its diverse initiatives.

The “Arts Commission” is a 51-year-old state agency that is currently under the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), and is referred to as the Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA). It administers grant-making programs and operational funding that are critical to overall health of the arts sector in Connecticut, and which bring in National Endowment for the Arts matching funds. In addition to grants, COA supports statewide arts education initiatives (including HOT Schools), professional development, workforce development, creative sector research, special projects focused on underserved and rural communities, poet laureate and state troubadour programs, and the Poetry Out Loud initiative.

3. Change the way allocations are made from the Connecticut Arts Endowment Fund. CAA endorses Connecticut Bill 7226, which will enable the Arts Endowment Fund to operate more productively and more similarly to standard endowment funds at no additional expense to the state budget.

4. Support state bonding to finance the capital improvement, restoration and modernization of cultural facilities.