

THE ARTS COUNT IN EVERY PART OF THE STATE

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By New York City Arts Coalition

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THE ARTS COUNT IN EVERY PART OF THE STATE REBUILD the COUNCIL on the ARTS

We are asking the legislature to join with us in a partnership to rebuild this essential part of the cultural support system in New York State and to work with us in the coming months to promote a dialog throughout the state on how the state council on the arts can better serve arts groups and artists and the communities of which they are a part. Our goal is to reach the level of \$50 million in grants funding over the next four years.

As a first step in this four year effort, we are ask the state legislature to:

Increase the proposed grants funding for the Council by \$4.5 million to \$36.1 million

Commit to joint hearings with both houses around the state to listen to our ideas about how the Council on the Arts can be re-imagined as it enters its sixth decade

In 1960, when the Council was created Governor Rockefeller and New York State legislature declared this use of tax payer money was "to insure that the role of the arts in the life of our communities will continue to grow and will play an ever more significant part in the welfare and educational experience of our citizens and in maintaining the paramount position of this state in the nation and in the world as cultural center."

They then followed up with even more unique language by stating:

"It is further declared that all activities undertaken by the state in carrying out this policy shall be directed toward encouraging and assisting rather than in any ways limiting the freedom of artistic expression that is essential for the well-being of the arts."

It was an occasion of which New Yorkers and the Governor and the New York State legislature were rightfully proud. They had set the stage for a federal endowment to fund the arts established five years later, and led the way for other states to emulate their actions.

It is time to return to the vision and commitment of those early years. In the decades since the Council on the Arts was created, the state has allocated from its own resources \$1.5 Billion to support grants to the arts sector. Hundreds of arts groups and thousands of artists' projects have been funded in part by those grants. The artistic maturity of many of these groups and the contributions of individual artists are outstanding. However, fiscal reality is not commensurate with that artistic achievement. Indeed, in far too many instances, outstanding arts groups are at grave risk fiscally.

Hardly a community in New York State has been unaffected by this growth in cultural activity. Cultural tourism, arts education, and direct employment in the cultural sector are critical to the state economic vitality. The creativity of the arts sector is as vital to this state as the innovation in technology, but too easily overlooked. Artists and arts groups are entrepreneurial and create numerous small businesses throughout the state, albeit the business model is non-profit. However, non-profit or profit making, jobs are created, products are made, supplies are purchased, space is rented or built, and other professionals, such as accountants and lawyers, are required.

How the Arts make a difference in the economic health of New York State?

Greater Buffalo's economic impact of non-profit arts and cultural organization is \$155.2 million.

The economic impact of Westchester's non-profit arts and culture industry is \$119.88 million and 3779 jobs.

The non-profit arts and culture are a \$21 million industry in the Northern Adirondack region supporting 506 jobs.

The arts in Onondaga County yield \$71 million, 1060 jobs and \$3.2 million in local tax revenues.

New York City's non-profit cultural sector generated \$5.8 billion in economic impact and 40,500 jobs.

Funding History:

1960 New York State FIRST in the nation to establish state arts agency.

1965 National Endowment for the Arts established, following in footsteps of New York State five years earlier.

1990 New York State Council on the Arts reaches milestone as legislature passes budget of \$54.3 million in funding for arts groups and artists.

1993 Arts funding in New York State hits new low of \$23 million for grants.

2008 Legislature returns grants funding for arts to new level of \$49 million.

2012 Proposed grants budget for Council on the Arts remains at \$31.6 million for upcoming fiscal year --nearly \$4 million less than in 1985!

FUNDING IS CRITICAL; SO IS VISION. JOIN US ON BOTH.

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