

**FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING**

March 11, 2008

**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
CAPA - SHUBERT THEATER**

**COMMITTEE BILL #5554
AN ACT CONCERNING TAX CREDITS AND INCENTIVES FOR LIVE THEATER
AND THE PERFORMING ARTS INDUSTRY**

CULTURAL TREASURES PROGRAM

Good morning members of the Committee. My name is John Fisher and I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Association for the Performing Arts (CAPA) and the Shubert Theater in New Haven.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for the support you have expressed for CAPA and the Shubert Theater, and I would like to state our support for Committee Bill # 5554 An Act Concerning Tax Credits and Incentives for Live Theater and the Performing Arts.

With the rich resources of our Performing Arts Centers which include the Shubert Theater, Stamford Center for the Arts, The Bushnell and the Palace Theater in Waterbury, Connecticut offers some of the best facilities and technical personnel in close proximity to Broadway and New York.

As with the film tax credits, this bill will expand the economic stimulus to the live performing arts to include the mounting and production of both pre-Broadway and the national touring productions of musicals and plays.

The Shubert Theater has a long and distinguished history as one of our nation's most important theaters, hosting more than 600 pre-Broadway shows, including 300 world premieres of such classics as Oklahoma!, Carousel, The King & I, and A Streetcar Named Desire. Over the years the economics of our business has changed and we must find new ways to adapt.

In recent years the Shubert has hosted several pre-Broadway shows including Civil War and Neil Simon's Proposals. Last year at the Shubert we mounted the start of the National Tours of Twelve Angry Men starring Richard Thomas and George Wendt, and the start of the hit Broadway musical Jersey Boys.

These two productions provided an additional six weeks of employment for our local union stagehands, all of whom live in Connecticut, for a total payroll of over \$450,000. The economic impact of the show's cast, crew, designers and producers for our hotels, restaurants and local businesses was over 1.2 million dollars.

Even with Connecticut's close proximity to New York, these productions are difficult to attract due to competition from theaters and performing arts centers in other states. The proposed incentives will enable Connecticut's theaters to attract more of these productions, providing additional local employment, revenue for our local not-for-profit theaters and substantial economic impact.

We would also like to express our support for the new Cultural Treasures Program and the positive impact it will have on the arts in Connecticut. The State is a leader in the visual and performing arts, and this Program will enable the citizens of Connecticut to strengthen, preserve and grow the arts, culture and tourism for our community. Thank you very much.