

**APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING**

February 17, 2009

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

Good evening 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 respectfully request that this support continue at the current level, and restored in the second year of the biennial budget. Your generous support through this appropriation has enabled the Shubert to continue and expand its programming, education and community outreach activities.

The Shubert Theater has a long and distinguished history as one of the nation's most important theaters, hosting more than 300 world premieres of such classics as Oklahoma!, Carousel, and A Streetcar Named Desire.

With your support, we have expanded our Community Ticketing Program, Shubert Night at a Performance and this year will provide over 1400 free tickets to underserved members of the community. Participating groups include youth, senior citizens, churches, housing authority residents, and recreation centers.

CAPA and the Shubert Theater work extensively with the public schools and have expanded our Pilobolus after school program to Derby and Shelton as well as New Haven. This award winning program reaches out to at risk boys in grades five to eight.

The Shubert hosts a wide variety of events, providing entertainment for a diverse audience and enriching the community. Without your support this programming would not be possible.

While our economy continues to be challenging, which consequently impacts our ticket sales, fiscal support from the State ensures that the Shubert's lights continue to shine, and more importantly that the Shubert provides a positive economic impact on the region.

The Shubert continues to have a direct and substantial effect on many organizations. Fiscal support from the State continues our shared services program to other non-profits which include the New Haven Symphony, the New Haven Ballet, and the International Festival of Arts and Ideas. As a result of the services provided by the Shubert, the estimated savings to our partners is \$300,000 annually.

Last year more than 90,000 people attended events at the Shubert and another 40,000 people attended free Concerts on the Green. CAPA and the Shubert provides over \$20 million in annual economic impact to the region.

As a leading arts organization in Connecticut, since 2001 CAPA and the Shubert Theater have provided over 120 million dollars in total economic impact to the state. In the past seven years CAPA has presented and hosted over 900 events at the Shubert with more than 700,000 attendees, generating ticket sales of over \$35 million.

The Shubert also provide significant employment which includes, in addition to administrative staff, over 200 union stagehands work approx. 3,000 shifts each year, providing salaries of over \$700,000 to the members of Connecticut's IATSE Local 74.

In addition to our dedicated appropriation, we also wish to stress how important and effective the line items are for the Shubert Theater and our fellow cultural institutions that serve our communities and the state of Connecticut. Thank you very much.