

**APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING**

December 9, 2009

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

Good evening members of the Committee. My name is Sheri Kaplan and I am the General Manager 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. The Shubert Theater has a long and distinguished history as one of the nation's most important theaters. Your support has enabled the Shubert to continue, maintain, and expand its programming, education and community outreach activities.

CAPA and the Shubert Theater work extensively with our 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.

Last year more than 95,000 people attended events at the Shubert and another 25,000 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 is responsible for over 3,000 hotel room nights a year generating \$385,000 in hotel bookings and nearly \$70,000 in hotel taxes that is direct tax revenue for the state. Parking accounts for 30,000 cars a year and \$210,000 in income for the city.

We understand the severe challenges the state and everyone is facing at the moment. We have taken steps to deal with the economic situation and have reduced our full time staff by 24% with the elimination and layoff of 3 positions.

CAPA has been very efficient and successful since assuming management of the Shubert in 2001. At that time we reduced the full time staff from 33 to 14. Currently we employ over 200 part time event staff and have over 300 volunteers. Annually, the state receives \$50,000 in payroll taxes from Shubert full and part time employees, and an additional \$65,000 in sales and entertainment revenue for the state.

With all of the challenges with the state budget, we understand the need for all of us to bear the burden. In the past two years our state funding has been reduced by 23% from \$500,000 to \$385,000.

Additional reductions proposed by Governor Rell of 35% will potentially have very serious repercussions on all of our programs and services for the community.

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.

Thank you very much.