

Senator Slossberg, Representative Morin, Members of GAE,

My name is Ethan Boisvert. I am a proud artist and resident of Hartford here to testify against the proposed bill of bill 148, AN ACT ELIMINATING THE REQUIREMENT FOR PURCHASE OF ARTWORK FOR STATE BUILDING PROJECTS.

I believe the case has been made over and over and proven worldwide that culture is a driving force for tourism and thus aids in the creation of new jobs, markets and revenue to the state.

Connecticut's history of embracing the arts has brought us such things as the Wadsworth Atheneum, the oldest public art museum in the country, a collection so grand it is envied both in America and around the world. It brings us architects that made the state capitol, Bushnell Park, its pond, the sculptures around it and the riverfront, Elizabeth Park, and all the great architecture this city is rich with. It has also brought us the beautiful sculpture right here in the Legislative Office Building lobby.

These are the permanent reasons to visit this city and many similar reasons exist throughout the state. I would like to take a moment and address the comment I read as support for this bill, which stated: "A 20 year old sculpture is not a job in 2011.

I beg to differ. Each project was a job for an artist, which created other jobs and supported professionals, proprietors, producers, etc. right here in state. This is an instance where the money stays in Connecticut. Projects like these pay artists, who pay for supplies, consultation with architects, hiring of assistants, fabricators, etc. I myself have just been selected to submit a proposal for a public work. If I win the proposal, I will be buying paint from the Jerry's Artarama in West Hartford, milled lumber from southern CT, metal fixtures from a local hardware store, renting scaffolding from a company in East Hartford, and hiring local assistants to complete the task. Every dollar will be spent in state.

And what we are left with is something of much longer life than a simple job. And as great art aims to do, a good sculpture, painting, or mural, adds to the culture, inspires the youth, creativity, draws attention to locations in a benevolent sense, creating tourism.

As I have looked over the budget and calculated the numbers it seems that we spend a miniscule part of the state budget on this program. We spend around \$500,000.00 per year on the 1% to artwork program, which is \$0.003 of every \$100.00 spent. That is taking a penny out of \$100.00, not even a penny out of every dollar, but a penny out of every HUNDRED dollars and cutting it into 3 pieces. We are questioning what a 3rd of a penny is worth, and worse, wondering with all its benefits, if it might be hurting us? A fifth of a penny dedicated to the preservation of culture? I think this is an extremely small price to pay for an investment in the creation of history that we pass on down to our children. I certainly hope we can see past this questioning and make the right choice to embrace vision instead of turning on it.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify for this bill.