

Hartford Stage
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Darko Tresnjak, Artistic Director
Michael Stotts, Managing Director

February 15, 2012

Governor Dannel P. Malloy
Commissioner Catherine Smith

On behalf of Darko Tresnjak, our artistic director, Paul Bourdeau, Board President, and the staff, artists and board of Hartford Stage, I am here to urge you and the Legislature to take the following actions with regard to funding for the arts in the State of Connecticut:

1. The \$14 million in arts and culture funding that was originally allocated in the biennale budget needs to be segregated from the Statewide Marketing budget. I urge you to return to the approved FY12-13 budget breakdowns.
2. In July, the Commission on Culture and Tourism was moved into DECD. Under Economic and Community Development, the Office of the Arts has defined a new direction, with the arts at the heart of an economic development strategy to create vibrant communities that will attract new talent and businesses. To build this strategy, arts organizations need financial resources. Moving the \$14 million originally allocated to arts and culture to a more ambiguous line will be detrimental to Connecticut's rich cultural assets.
3. To qualify for National Endowment for the Arts funding, Connecticut must have dedicated funding for the arts, a designated arts agency and an independent arts commission. If arts funding is categorized under "Statewide Marketing" we may not qualify for NEA funding, putting at risk the federal dollars that are much needed to support the state's important arts organizations.
4. Arts and culture events and institutions are the key attractions for visitors. The state must invest in these institutions. Without strong, healthy cultural institutions, there will be nothing to market.
5. The \$14 million should be awarded on a competitive basis to all arts and culture organizations.



BOX OFFICE 860-527-5151

Connecticut is a culturally rich State, which per capita has more arts venues than almost every other state. How can the State put at risk the financial well-being of all of these important assets that create jobs, stimulate enormous economic activity, provide important learning tools and opportunities for our children?

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Stotts".

Michael Stotts
Managing Director