

Good evening Senator Harp, Representative Walker, and Distinguished Members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Nancy Stula and I am the Director and Curator of the Lyman Allyn Art Museum in New London. I am here to ask for the Committee's full support of Senate Bill No. 530 AN ACT CONCERNING FUNDING FOR THE CONSORTIUM OF CONNECTICUT ART MUSEUMS.

The Lyman Allyn Art Museum (LAAM) is an independent community-based Museum in New London and one of the seven art museums comprising the Consortium of Connecticut Art Museums.

Each year the Lyman Allyn welcomes visitors from across the State and the Northeast. Visitors come to view our permanent collection of American Art, tour our temporary, changing exhibitions, as well as participate in our wide array of public and educational programs. The Museum serves people of all ages and from many backgrounds but our emphasis is on serving the area school children. We fully subsidize all field trips from all New London public schools, where 93% of the population lives below the poverty level (statistic from the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut annual meeting, 11/29/11). The Lyman Allyn pays for bus transportation, admission, and curriculum-related hands-on activity fees for all New London field trips. We serve approximately 5,000 children each year. In addition, all New London residents enjoy free admission. The Lyman Allyn Art Museum has a strong commitment to its community, as do each of the other six museums in this Consortium.

Until this fiscal year, FY 2013, the Lyman Allyn, like the majority of other non-profit arts organizations, received a designated annual allocation from the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism (General Operating Support and Connecticut Arts Endowment Fund). We depended on this allocation and it was made a part of our budget every year used to subsidize our small marketing budget and public programs. When this allocation was eliminated, we lost

a portion of our operating budget. When the Lyman Allyn applied for a competitive grant from the Office of the Arts at DECD, that request was declined.

In conjunction with the decreased private and foundation support in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, the Lyman Allyn has had to decrease its annual operating budget allowing for little marketing and resulting in a reduced number of public programs.

The Consortium of Connecticut Art Museums seeks an appropriation of \$1.5 million from the State of Connecticut to be shared equally by our seven member museums. This requested appropriation will enable us not only to reinstate but expand our public and educational offerings. It will additionally allow us to increase our outreach--collaborative community efforts and outreach into the New London public schools--as well as increase our marketing efforts, both of which are critical to the success of this museum.

I hope that you will give this request full support in this Committee as well as later on in the legislative process. Thank you very much.

