

February 20, 2013

Dear Members of the Connecticut Appropriations Committee:

As a participating member of several arts and history organizations in Litchfield County, I write to offer testimony to the necessity of state funded support of the arts programs in Connecticut.

Connecticut shares a symbiotic relationship with its neighboring states and draws many from New York, Massachusetts and beyond to view and experience firsthand its rich historical past and amazing art and cultural opportunities. The economic impact of this phenomenon cannot be overstated. Not only do cultural offerings themselves benefit from the support of those attending, every other facet of tourism, restaurants, lodging, other services and shops and antique stores in our state also benefit.

So, the idea of funding for cultural programs being curtailed is directly in opposition to what should be done. The opportunity to experience economic growth and the balance with other very necessary programs is delicate; however, *nothing* stimulates the economy of Connecticut (now that agriculture and industrial entities have left the landscape) more than its arts and cultural offerings.

Tourism is a leading Connecticut industry! Why would or should state funding be cut from arts programs that draw visitors who provide critical support of our local commerce? It should be *increased!*

Thank you for listening!

Respectfully,

*Lynn Wellings*

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