

# City Of Torrington



RYAN J. BINGHAM  
Mayor

**Written Testimony**  
**Appropriations Committee**  
**Planning & Conservation Subcommittee**  
**Wednesday, February 20<sup>th</sup> 2013**

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The City of Torrington is fully supportive of funding requests for the Department of Economic & Community Development and the Connecticut Office of the Arts. We recognize the great importance that the arts have on both our local and state economy and have seen firsthand the many positive benefits that come with funding great programs like the Arts Catalyze Placemaking and City Canvases.

We were fortunate to have been selected by the Office of the Arts to apply for the City Canvases grant, and ultimately were selected to participate. The awarding of this grant directly paid for local artists to create amazing pieces of artwork that now adorn Downtown Torrington. We were fortunate to hire two artists to create three distinct pieces that represent our great city.

Furthermore, this grant also helped to employ several local companies that worked with the artists to erect and secure their pieces. This is a prime example of the benefit that grants such as this can provide. Being able to work with local companies and putting this grant money directly back into our city is a great thing and we were so lucky to be able to do so. As a result of our receiving this grant, we were able to hold two separate unveilings of the murals. To coincide with the unveiling of two of these murals, we planned and held a Harvest Festival, complete with a drum circle, fire pits, street vendors, and street performers. The event drew hundreds of individuals to Downtown Torrington to view these amazing pieces of art. While there, many of these people shopped at our downtown businesses, ate at restaurants, and enjoyed all that our city has to offer. Without the City Canvases grant, we would not have been able to hold such a great event that had so many positive ripple effects for our local economy.

Maintaining competitive state arts funding through the Culture, Tourism and Arts budget line item is one of the best ways that cities like Torrington can attract visitors and guests and in turn help put dollars into our local and state economy. Connecticut is so very lucky to have a myriad of cultural and tourism based attractions that are worthy of recognition by the state. It is imperative that funding is maintained so that we may continue to support and promote great things such as City Canvases. I urge you to maintain this funding and continue to support the great efforts of the Department of Economic & Community Development and the Connecticut Office of the Arts. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Ryan J. Bingham  
Mayor