

Senator LeBeau, Representative Perone, and Distinguished Members of the Commerce 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 an astronomical 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.

While the Lyman Allyn Art Museum has a strong commitment to its community, as do each of the other six museums in this Consortium, together we make a difference statewide. As a group, we employ 222 people, we present 87 exhibitions each year, and serve over 350,000 visitors, every year. The economic impact of these seven art museums exceeds \$25 million dollars a year for the State of Connecticut.

The Consortium of Connecticut Art Museums is seeking an annual 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 to continue to present exhibitions and public and educational programs but more importantly will allow us to increase our offerings and expand our outreach and marketing efforts. I hope that you will give this request full support in this Committee as well as later on in the legislative process. Thank you.

