

# MYSTIC MUSEUM OF ART

February 9, 2016

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Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and members of the Appropriation Committee,

On behalf of the board of directors and staff of the Mystic Museum of Art, I am pleased to submit this testimony in response to the Governor's FY 2017 Proposed Budget.

The Mystic Museum of Art's mission is to inspire creativity and critical dialogue by engaging the regional community in the understanding, appreciation and practice of visual art.

Governor Malloy's proposed budget reduced by 25% critical grant funding and tourism funding for the state which is even more impactful after state grants to arts organizations were already cut drastically in FY 2016.

Arts organizations and museums are economic drivers in this state and especially in tourism driven areas such as Southeastern Connecticut. MMoA spends \$457,000 of its annual budget each year on goods and services in our community, serves 20,000 visitors each year, and offers free admission. MMoA's Education Departments works with 15 area schools with 2200 school children participating in site visits or field trips.

**In Connecticut, museums are economic engines:**

- 767 museums are responsible for \$191.6 million in direct spending, with a projected economic impact of \$402.4 million.
- Connecticut museums directly employ 3075 people with a total employment impact of 4919.

Nationally, the nonprofit arts and culture industry annually generates over \$135 billion in economic activity, supports more than 4.1 million full-time jobs and returns over \$22 billion in local, state and federal tax revenues. Governments that support the arts see an average return on investment of over \$7 in taxes for every \$1 that the government appropriates.

I understand that the state is facing a major budget deficit and difficult cuts need to be made. As you make your decisions, I hope you will consider that budget reductions to the CT Department of Economic and Community Development will be crippling to the arts, cultural, and tourism in southeastern Connecticut and statewide.

9 Water Street, Mystic Connecticut 06355

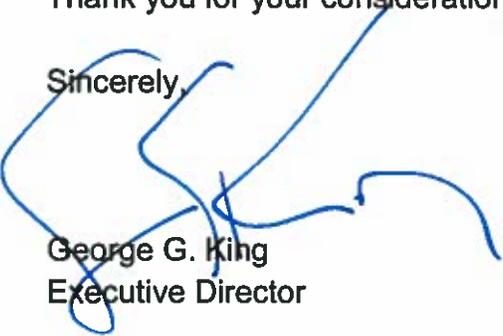
Tel. 860.536.7601 fax 860.536.0610 [www.mysticarts.org](http://www.mysticarts.org)

The DECD Office of the Arts grant opportunities provide critical public funding to arts organizations of all sizes. I ask that you strongly consider keeping the DECD Office of the Arts funding in particular the arts grants in their own line item under the direction of that department.

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Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,



George G. King  
Executive Director

Cc: Rep. John Scott, Rep. Aundre Bumgardner, Sen Andrew Maynard, Sen Courtney, Wendy Bury SE Cultural Coalition