



Appropriations Committee: Conservation & Development Subcommittee

Public Hearing | Tuesday, February 11, 2020

MUSIC HAVEN

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Hartley, Representative DiMassa, Representative Horn, and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee,

In addition to my general testimony about investing in Greater New Haven's arts industry, I want to draw your attention to Music Haven, one of the most distinct and impactful organizations in our creative community. Last year, they organized their students and families to secure Direct Line Item Funding of \$100,000. However, they were the only organization that received an allocation for only the first year of the biennium. I urge you allocate \$100,000 for Music Haven in FY21, as well.

Music Haven provides 100% tuition-free, high-quality, one-on-one music instruction to students from low-income neighborhoods, which is the only requirement for program eligibility. As such, 90% of their students are Black and Latinx. While arts nonprofits nationally develop diversity, equity, and inclusion goals, Music Haven has successfully exemplified these principles for the last 10 years. Their commitment to social justice is at the core of their organization. For example, 90% of their employees are fulltime with benefits, including their teaching staff, and earn at least \$22/hour. Beyond being an excellent employer, this helps maintain long-term relationships with their students, families, and audiences.

Public funding for the arts is very limited in Connecticut, even for organizations that provide vital after school services like Music Haven. Their support from the City of New Haven and its Board of Education has declined steadily; right now, they receive no local public support for their \$650,000 operating budget each year. Every dollar the state provide makes a transformative difference in their programs, the lives of their students, and our creative ecosystem.

Thank you for your consideration. I can be reached with any questions at Daniel@NewHavenArts.org or at 203-772-2788.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel Fitzmaurice". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'D' being particularly large and stylized.

Daniel Fitzmaurice
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



arts council
GREATER NEW HAVEN