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HB6119 - Arts, Culture, and Tourism Funding

The growth of our economy as well as our general wellbeing is highly dependent on the health and support of the Arts. Currently, the lights are turned off on many of our galleries, arts businesses, theaters, dance companies, and non profits. Our iconic town greens are desolate, lonely for community gatherings of musical concerts, art exhibitions, and festivals

My entire life has been devoted to the creation of art and the teaching of art to all ages. I was a high school Art Teacher at New London High School for 34 years, and at Windham High School for almost 10 years previous to that. I had been teaching at Wesleyan Potters until the pandemic, where I am a key member of this cooperative and sell my art in their gallery. Through all of my teaching I have been astounded by the power of the Arts and their impact on the development of the whole person. Critical thinking skills and problem solving through art will prepare our youth for the demands of the future, and provide social emotional learning.

We all need to be expressive and creative, and the interaction with the Arts feeds our souls. I am also a small businesswoman and member of an artisans cooperative in Essex, where I sell my hand crafted jewelry and assist in running the shop. I have met folks from all over the country and world who happily saunter down Main Street, visit our shop and purchase one of a kind hand - made works of art. But our cooperative was closed for three months and business is still adversely affected. Small businesses, individual artists, educators and non profits continue to struggle while navigating these difficult times.

We are all hungry for the resumption of art experiences which truly enrich our lives. Passing HB6119 will increase funding for the Arts in Connecticut and help to enable these goals while growing our economy.