

To whom it may concern,

My name is Patti Flynn-Harris and I am writing in support of HB6119, An Act Concerning Arts, Culture and Tourism Funding, that will greatly affect the communities that are involved and support the arts in CT, and Ball and Socket Arts in Cheshire, in particular.

I appreciate the proposed increase in the allocation of funding and the change of the name of the fund to emphasize Arts and Culture. I think it's important to realize that there is a large part of "tourism" in Connecticut that is based on art and culture. I, like many residents, cross state lines to visit museums, art exhibits and attend concerts. I, like many others, don't go to another state for just "R&R". My relaxation is more often found in a museum than a beach!

The mission of Ball & Socket Arts is to convert a historic button manufacturing factory to a mixed-use arts and cultural center in Cheshire, CT. Old factories, given new life as cultural centers have successfully driven economic development in town like Cheshire across the country and have improved the lives of people in the immediate area and have attracted visitors from miles, benefiting businesses large and small.

The Town Council and Economic Development Commission of the Town of Cheshire have recognized the importance of the future development of the Ball and Socket property and the mission of B&S Arts. The Planning and Zoning Commission included it in its *Plan of Conservation and Development* as an important part of the continuation of the development of the West Cheshire section of the town.

I know Covid-19 is having a major impact on funding for all areas and departments in the state. And historically, funding for tourism, arts and culture have been low hanging fruit for budget cutters. But please remember that in this time of C-19, families who have been sheltering at home for months, with proper CDC guidelines, can, and want to, participate in the arts in Connecticut. They want to get out and see all

the great things Connecticut offers them - both at the beach and in the museums!

Thank you for your consideration and I urge you to pass HB6119 to help strengthen the growth of Connecticut through the arts and culture of the state!

Sincerely,

Patti Flynn-Harris  
360 Carlton Dr  
Cheshire, CT 06410