

On behalf of the Guilford Keeping Society, I am writing to support of HB 6119, An Act Concerning Arts, Culture and Tourism Funding. We support an increase in the allocation of Hotel Occupancy Tax for cultural purposes from 10% to 25% - maintaining current support of the humanities, arts and tourism sectors during COVID and significantly increasing support once normal times return.

Our non-profit historical society owns, maintains two museum houses in Guilford (estab. 1639) and conducts educational and tourism programs in them and in our community. Guilford possesses the oldest house in CT and the third largest number of old houses in New England and, as such, is a tourism target on the shoreline for those who have heard about our beautiful town and its culture.

While we are proud that we work for much of our funding through conducting events, a significant portion of our support comes in the form of specific, targeted grants from CT Humanities. More than just funding, CTH offers guidance, information and support that are integral to our ability to maintain our high standards and excellent reputation. CT Humanities is essential to the extraordinary culture and character of Connecticut.

Much of how we recover and, dare we say, expand our influence as a positive and enduring presence in Guilford depends on the ability of CT tourism agencies to support the Guilford Keeping Society and others like it. Increasing and maintaining the Hotel Occupancy Tax allocation to 25% is critical to that mission.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Hartmann, Jr.

President

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