

# CThumanities

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February 10, 2021

Dear Members of the Commerce Committee:

I am writing as the executive director at CT Humanities in support of **HB 6119, An Act Concerning Arts, Culture, and Tourism Funding**. COVID-19 has decimated the hotel occupancy tax and OPM estimates that the fund will be short \$14M by the end of June 2021.

To gauge the impact of the pandemic on the cultural sector and to evaluate how we could best leverage our resources and partnerships to stave off a “mass extinction event,” CT Humanities conducted two needs surveys. Our findings are sobering, revealing significant disruption and job loss in the sector and as much as one-third of museums at significant risk of closing permanently by next fall.

Increasing the allocation of the hotel occupancy tax to 25% can keep the overall fund in balance for the coming year and help stabilize Connecticut’s cultural and tourism economy. When the hotel occupancy tax rebounds, the increase will invigorate the sector and provide vitality beyond the current crisis, expanding our ability to help Connecticut’s communities explore and share their histories, strengthen our civic foundation, and sustain our state’s cultural institutions as thriving heritage tourism destinations for years to come.

CT Humanities is committed to the cultural and civic vibrancy and resilience of Connecticut – as demonstrated by our work for over four decades. We stand ready to support the non-profit organizations in the humanities/cultural sector of our state and have the trust, experience and infrastructure in place to distribute funding through our peer-reviewed grantmaking process. The passing of **HB 6119, An Act Concerning Arts, Culture, and Tourism Funding** will help us ensure the vital work of preserving our histories, revitalizing our tourism economy and promoting the skills needed to preserve our civic integrity.

Sincerely,



Jason R. Mancini, Ph.D.

Executive Director

860.235.9458 (cell) | 860.937.6636 (office)

JMancini@cthumanities.org

### About CT Humanities

CT Humanities is the non-profit state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the only statewide humanities organization that serves as the primary access point for grant funding for hundreds of non-profits including museums, cultural centers, historical societies, libraries, and civic organizations that enrich and support every community in our state.