

DATE: February 8, 2021

TO: Commerce Committee

FROM: Ruthie Ursone Napoleone, Development Manager American Mural Project

RE: Proposed H.B. 6119 An Act Concerning Arts, Culture and Tourism Funding

Senator Hartley, Representative Simmons, Senator Cohen, Representative Rochelle and distinguished members of the Commerce Committee:

My name is Ruthie Ursone Napoleone and I am a lifelong resident of Winsted, where I also work as development manager for the American Mural Project. I am writing to urge you to support Bill 6110, an Act Concerning Arts, Culture and Tourism Funding.

Increasing the portion of the of the hotel and lodging tax that supports the Tourism Fund from 10% to 25% will result in the following impact:

- Limit the continued negative effect of COVID-19 on the arts and culture sector, which is an economic driver in Connecticut.
- Because the current allocation goes to the general fund, it will not take funding away from another legislative priority.
- Allocates a larger portion of the existing tax to the Tourism Fund, but does not raise the amount of tax levied.

Furthermore, renaming the Tourism Fund to the Arts, Culture and Tourism Fund more accurately reflects the fund's current role in providing financial support to all three sectors.

I thank you for considering this position and again urge you to support this bill.

Ruthie Ursone Napoleone

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Development Manager
American Mural Project