



**Testimony for AN ACT CONCERNING ARTS, CULTURE AND TOURISM FUNDING  
Proposed H.B. No. 6119, Session Year 2021** **Feb. 10, 2021**

My name is Diane Ploch. I am the Administrator of the Arts & Culture Collaborative for the Waterbury Region. We are a 14-year-old regional arts and culture service agency under the auspices of the Greater Waterbury Chamber of Commerce Foundation. We serve artists, performers, theaters, arts and cultural organizations and their audiences in 16 towns in the Waterbury Region and Naugatuck Valley. I am also a long-time member of the board of the Connecticut Arts Alliance, a statewide arts advocacy organization.

I am writing to urge you to pass H.B. 6119 and its key actions:

- **Increase the percentage of hotel and lodging tax that is allocated to the Tourism Fund from 10 to 25%**  
**Why?** —This will help prevent further economic injury, address the impact of the pandemic shutdown and accelerate recovery of not only the arts and culture sector, but all of Connecticut. The arts and culture sector is a key economic driver for Connecticut and has been hit hard by the pandemic.  
— It does not impact the hotel and lodging tax rate. It simply allocates a larger percentage of that tax revenue to the Tourism Fund.
  
- **Fixing the percentage of the Tourism Fund that is allocated to Tourism at 60% and to Arts and Culture at 40% reflects how the fund is allocated now. It does not change how much funding is allocated to each.**
  
- **Renaming the Tourism Fund to the Arts, Culture and Tourism fund more accurately describes its role in providing state funding to all three of our sectors.**

The arts and culture industry spurs economic activity and provides revenue to the State. In normal times, Connecticut's arts and culture sector is a vital economic engine that represents 5% of Connecticut's economy, generates \$9 billion in economic activity annually and supports 57,000 jobs. The nonprofit arts sector alone returns \$7 for every \$1 invested by the State.

Federal Legislators and Governor Lamont have stepped forward with financial relief for the arts and culture community with funding to address the economic impact of the pandemic. This bill provides Connecticut legislators the opportunity to add their support. **Arts and culture mean business. This bill can help the arts and culture sector as it rebounds from the pandemic so it, in turn, can help the state to rebound.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Diane J. Ploch*

Diane J. Ploch, Administrator

[dploch@waterburyregionarts.com](mailto:dploch@waterburyregionarts.com)