

Testimony in Support of Governor Lamont's Proposed FY 2022-23 Budget

Andrea Aron
Appropriations Committee
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To the Distinguished Members of the Appropriations Committee

I am submitting my written testimony in support of Governor Lamont's proposed FY 2022-23 budget, which replenishes the Tourism Fund to its pre-pandemic level with no funding cuts to the Arts Community. I have previously submitted written and oral testimony in support of HB6119, a bill proposed by Representative Parker of the 101st District. The growth of our state economy, as well as our general mental health and wellbeing is highly dependent on the health and support of the Arts.

My entire life's career has been devoted to the creation and teaching of Art to all ages. I was a high school Art Teacher at New London High School for 34 years, and at Windham High School for almost 10 years previous to that. Throughout all of my years of teaching I have been astounded by the power of the Arts and their impact on the development of the whole person. Critical thinking skills and problem solving through Art will prepare our youth for the demands of the future, along with providing social and emotional learning. Interaction with the Arts feeds our souls!

I am also a small businesswoman and a member of the Connecticut River Artisans Cooperative in Essex, where I sell my hand crafted Jewelry and assist in running the shop. People visit our shop from all over the state, country, and world, and purchase one of a kind handmade works of Art. But our shop was closed for three months, and business is still adversely affected. Small businesses, individual artists, educators, and non-profits continue to struggle.

We are all hungry for the resumption of Art experiences, which truly enrich our lives. Passing the Governor's proposed budget along with HB6119 will increase funding for the Arts and help to grow our economy in Connecticut, along with our collective health and wellbeing.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Andrea Aron
Madison