

Testimony in Support of Governor's Proposed FY22 + FY23 Budget for
Conservation and Development Agencies, HB 6439: TOURISM FUND

Dear Co-Chair Senator Osten, Co-Chair Rep. Walker, Vice-Chair Senator Hartley, Vice-Chair Rep. Dathan, Vice-Chair Rep. Nolan, and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee,

Of all the 50 states in the country, I am glad I live in Connecticut. Why? Many reasons, but mainly:

- The food is really good
- Culture lives here. The arts in this state are mighty; the sheer numbers of talented people and artistic groups that make Connecticut their home are remarkable. "The Feast of New Haven" is real, and rich. Our theaters, our museums, our art galleries, our dance troupes, our orchestras and musical venues elevate the quality of life for all of us. In October, when City Wide Open Studios is celebrated, it is always astonishing to see the collective artistic output of our city. Erector Square alone carries an entire weekend; to witness what has been going on all year long, behind closed doors in an old factory building, is nothing short of inspiring.

The pandemic has been crippling to so many sectors of our community. On a micro level, I make contributions to the GoFundMe campaigns of fellow artists in trouble. On a macro level, I beseech our government to fund the arts and keep them not only alive, but thriving.

I trust the good people of the Arts Council to advocate for our arts groups and our individual artists. Therefore, I stand with the Arts Council in support of the Governor's budget proposal and the re-tool that creates an Arts, Culture, and Tourism Fund.

Thank you for making the will of the people manifest.

Sincerely,

Todd Lyon
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