

Dear Committee and Chair Rep. Walker:

I am writing in support of including funding for Music Haven in the state budget. I am told that it was mistakenly omitted from the budget for the second year in a row. <https://www.newhavenarts.org/arts-paper/articles/arts-army-rallies-to-keep-music-haven-in-state-budget> This organization in particular deserves our state support. It performs a service to lower income children of the community far out of proportion to its shoestring budget. Especially as our nation is finally grappling with the effects of our history of systemic squashing of people of color, and as we are attempting to work toward righting some of those wrongs, we are in great need of organizations such as Music Haven.

As a professional string player who often works with the faculty of Music Haven, I can attest that they are highly trained and accomplished players offering a high level of instruction to the students. And as a teacher myself, I experienced how learning music transformed the lives of several of my young students by increasing their overall confidence and ability to focus and learn in other subjects.

In addition, the music profession itself is now putting an enormous effort into making our profession more diverse, so that people of all stripes may be inspired by who they see onstage as well as what they hear. But professional orchestras and chamber music groups are the pinnacle of the industry and can effect little change without the grassroots training that schools like Music Haven provide.

Please include this small but mighty organization in the state's budget as generously as you can!

Sincerely,
Katrina Smith
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