



SUBJECT MATTER: Governor's Proposed FY 2022-2023 Budget for Conservation and Development Agencies

H.B. No. 6439 (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2023, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.

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Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Appropriations Committee members, greetings. I am Lew Wallace, and I am Board President of the Cultural Alliance of Western CT. I write in support of the Governor's proposal to allocate \$12.9 million in support for the Tourism Fund to maintain the important arts, humanities and tourism venues and attractions that contribute to the state's economy as well as our quality of life.

The Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut is based in Danbury and serves towns in Northern Fairfield and Southern Litchfield Counties. We empower the arts community to grow the economy and enrich people's lives.

We are one of 8 CT Office of the Arts Regional Service Organizations. The Cultural Alliance receives approximately \$40,000 annually from the Tourism Fund. We typically leverage these dollars to raise 2 to 3 times that from the private sector, providing services to organizations, artists, artisans, and the public throughout our 280,000-person region. These services include:

- Using social media to promote news and events in our region,
- Providing administrative services for members, i.e., fiscal sponsorship, coaching, technical support, etc.,
- Conducting small business trainings on issues specific to the creative community; and
- Identifying and eliminating barriers for participation and engagement by our diverse community.

Maintaining funding to the Tourism Fund will enable us to further grow our regional economy. One of the features unique to Arts and Humanities organizations is that unlike a for-profit business, we will never leave the state. An investment in us, and through us to the over 200 arts, humanities, and tourism entities in our region, is a permanent investment in Connecticut.

I ask you to please maintain funding for the Tourism Fund and continue investing in our State.

Respectfully,
Lew Wallace