

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR: SB 287 Maryland Arts and Culture Capital Grant Program

Thank you for consideration of SB287. This legislation creates the Maryland Arts and Culture Capital Grant Program, a capital grant fund that will be administered by the Maryland State Arts Council.

The Program has two components - a competitive grant program for large institutions (\$3 m+ budgets) and another one for mid-size to small institutions.

As a county local arts agency, the Worcester County Arts Council depends on our only source of support which comes in the form of the annual funding provided by the Maryland State Arts Council. This funding is distributed by the Maryland State Arts Council to all 24 state's jurisdictions through the Community Arts Development grant.

Although the Worcester County is a geographically large county with population over 51,000, the median household income falls well below the state average. Our county overall has a poverty rate that is above the state average, with our youth being 45-50% FARMS (free and reduced meal students) in our public-school system.

The Worcester County Arts Council strives for equitable funding for the arts on the local level through transparent processes that are accessible to all county constituents despite their social and economic status. We continue to lead the way in support of the arts with programs designed to encourage involvement in the arts by everyone in the community. We bring the arts to underserved areas of the community with its wealth of free, high quality art exhibits, activities, and performances. In addition, the Community Art Development Grant Program provides critical support to projects designed to involve those who are often shut out by economic barriers.

The SB 287 creates a special opportunity that will allow the Worcester County Arts Council to strengthen the impact of the important services we provide to grow vibrant arts community.

We know this fund would assist more than two dozen grantee organizations we support and enrich lives by access to and participation in a diverse spectrum of arts, artists and cultural experiences for all.

For these reasons, I ask for a FAVORABLE REPORT on SB 287

Respectfully,


Anna Mullis
Executive Director

Supporting Arts in Worcester County Since 1976