



Celebrating Creativity.
Connecting Communities.
Sharing Conversation.

Thank you for consideration of HB127. This legislation creates the Maryland Arts and Culture Capital Grant Program, a new 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 that is open to both arts organization and cultural and historical institutions.

The Kent Cultural Alliance (formerly the Kent County Arts Council) serves Maryland's smallest and most rural community. Kent County does not have access to the large corporate arts founders of Montgomery County and Baltimore City. We do not have a large population of wealthy philanthropists who are able to make multi-million dollar gifts to nonprofits. And, as a county arts council, we receive the smallest Community Arts Development grant of all 24 jurisdictions. HB 127 creates a program that promises equity in distribution of funds, and allows the small but critical arts services we provide to flourish.

The Kent Cultural Alliance is itself in the early stages of restoring a 200 year old farm house in Downtown Chestertown as its new permanent home. The Raimond Arts Building, which includes a 1799 two and a half story frame dwelling, will serve as a community center for arts and culture. With a budget of \$1.2 million (and \$800,000 already raised) the now 5000 square foot building will create a space for us to serve the people of Kent County, our 2000+ public school students, and the many visitors who come to experience the unique cultural ecology this beautiful county. We know this fund would help us complete this important project and would also help the nearly two dozen grantee organizations we support who are doing work in all corners of our county.

For these reasons, I ask for a FAVORABLE REPORT on HB 127.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Schratwieser', is written over a faint, larger version of the same signature.

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