



January 27, 2020

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairman Guy Guzzone and the Honorable Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee,

I am writing to you to express my steadfast support for Senate Bill 287: Maryland Arts and Culture Capital Grant Program. This program will give Maryland arts organizations efficient, accessible and more equitable access to vital State capital funding support. Creating this program will make planning for capital projects easier, ease assembly members and arts organization workloads, and position the State of Maryland as a forward moving leader in capital funding for the arts.

While the current process—submitting bond bills or gaining access to the Capital Grants budget—has helped place Maryland as a strong supporter of arts infrastructure at the national scale, it still operates through a time-consuming, often confusing, lengthy, and challenging process that usually results in only larger, more well-known arts organizations receiving State capital funding. Not every arts organization has the means or money to be able to do this—therefore creating this program and housing it under Maryland State Arts Council's umbrella instills equitable, accessible funding for all organizations to obtain. I know firsthand having gone through this process with both bond bills and capital budgets more than once, I know that this program will be manageable, create opportunities for organizations to bolster their impact, and continue advancing inclusiveness in Maryland's artistic ecology.

I strongly support the creation of the Maryland Arts and Culture Capital Grant Program under Senate Bill 287. Please feel free to contact me directly if there are any questions at 410-986-4001. Thank you for proposing this legislation. For these reasons, I ask for a FAVORABLE REPORT on SB 287.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Ross", written over a light blue curved line that extends across the page.

Michael Ross
Executive Director