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February 22, 2024

The Honorable Pamela Bidel, Chair
The Honorable Katherine Klausmeier, Vice Chair
Senate Finance Committee

RE: Support of HB1451/SB 764

Dear Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I am writing in full support of HB1451/SB 764, the Arts Incubator Workgroup, which is crucial to help further sustain and invest in our creative arts economy. The arts are a cultural asset and a significant contributor to our state's economic vitality. Accordingly, artists are the backbone of the arts sector's success.

In Maryland, the arts sector is a formidable economic engine. For instance, our artists and cultural organizations generate \$837 million in economic activity annually, support eight thousand jobs, and return \$19.6 million in local and state tax revenues, as per the Maryland Department of Commerce FY2022 report. These figures underscore the undeniable impact of the arts on our economy.

Despite these substantial contributions, many artists face significant economic hardships. The path of an artist is often marked by financial instability due to the fluctuating nature of opportunities and the costs associated with producing their work. Additionally, the costs and expenses for venues to host and maintain these artists can often be a struggle. HB1451/SB 764 proposes an essential framework for addressing these economic challenges. It aims to further study the needs of artists and spaces to and provide the needed support.

Your support of this bill will acknowledge the cultural significance of our artists and reinforce a sector that is a cornerstone of Maryland's economic framework. We believe that with the proper support, our artists can continue to enhance the state's cultural landscape and drive economic growth.

Please consider the profound impact your support could have on the lives of artists and the cultural wealth of Maryland. Vote YES for HB1451/SB 764, ensuring our state remains a nurturing ground for the arts.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this pivotal issue.

Sincerely,


Lauren Dugas Glover