

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on-line, furthermore as a New York state citizen, I am very appreciative that you are having statewide hearings regarding the budget. Unfortunately, I am not in person to present testimony but for a good reason – today the Huntington Arts Council has a panel meeting adjudicating the first of three Decentralization re-grant meetings for Suffolk County artists and arts organizations.

I represent the Huntington Arts Council, Inc. (HAC). HAC serves greater Long Island with primary focus on the North Shore, reaching out annually to over 750,000 individuals.

The Huntington Arts Council enriches the quality of life of Long Islanders with programs and services that address the needs and interests of artists, cultural organizations and the community.

The arts community is a significant driver of our economic growth – we are employers, we hire vendors, provide services and more. With an annual expenditure of \$850,000, our organization alone generates 27 FTE jobs and impacts the local government revenue for organizations and audiences a total of \$612,597 with total expenditures of impact of organizations and audience over \$16 million dollars. These figures were compiled with the use of the Arts & Economic Prosperity Calculator at americansforthearts.org.

In our community the arts are currently being utilized for the redevelopment and revitalization of Huntington Station. National models have shown that the use of the arts as an element of revitalization can register impressive results in economic growth and affordable housing. Researchers are now considering creativity to be a valuable US commodity in the quest for global peace and prosperity within the 21st century. In this region alone, millions of dollars are generated through cultural activities.

Arts-in-Education being central to its mission, HAC has the Journey program serving 8 school districts with 45,000 enrolled students. Journey is a multi-cultural arts program founded over 20 years ago by Sandi Chapin.

We ask you to restore funding for the New York State Council on the Arts budget to its original 1989 level of \$60 million. We are grateful for the increase to \$49 million which in our community has already meant increased funds to local arts groups through Decentralization.

We are proud to acknowledge that local interests in this budget also include aid to symphony orchestras, individual artists, and school improvement. Thank you for your time and consideration of your support to the New York Council on the Arts budget.

Respectfully submitted,

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