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December 3, 2007

Edward G. Rendell, Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Room 225, Capitol
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor:

This letter is a request for an increase of \$2 million in the appropriation for grants-to-the-arts in the upcoming budget. Grants-to-the-arts are administered by our nationally recognized state arts agency, the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA).

This increase not only will support Pennsylvania's quality of life, but also its economic prosperity and competitive position among other states. Enclosed is a copy of the *Arts & Economic Prosperity* report, which documents the important role the arts play as economic drivers throughout the Commonwealth. The nonprofit arts and culture organizations and their audiences in Pennsylvania generated almost 62,000 full-time equivalent jobs statewide, \$1.99 billion in economic activity and \$238 million in state and local government revenue.

However, at \$1.22 per capita, Pennsylvania lags behind every neighboring state but one in support for the arts through its state arts agency and dropped from the rank of 15th to 17th per capita in the nation this fiscal year. Competing cultural institutions on our borders receive as much as triple what our Commonwealth's arts organizations receive from our state. This is not insignificant when it comes to attracting cultural tourism dollars or maintaining the outstanding level of opportunities available to Pennsylvanians to participate in the arts in their many forms, from symphonies to neighborhood festivals.

Arts and culture in Pennsylvania supports economic recovery by serving as a catalyst for downtown revitalization efforts, stimulates trade through cultural tourism, and helps to attract and retain college graduates and knowledge-based workers. Study of the arts in school has been shown to benefit performance in all academic subjects, keep students in school, improve student behavior, and foster creativity and inventiveness.

Funding from the PCA is important because it provides a flexible source of support for the operation of arts organizations. The PCA has excelled in expanding access to state arts funding across the Commonwealth. This success has increased demand for state arts dollars to such an extent that funding levels have dropped each year for most organizations.

Pennsylvanians have a strong cultural heritage that we can be very proud of. It is important that we nurture that living heritage. Parents want a better future for Pennsylvania's children and seek out arts opportunities for enrichment and exposure to the finer things and to a wider world experience.

I urge you to include a minimum increase of \$2 million in next year's budget and for the remaining years of your administration. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Wojnaroski, Sr.', with a stylized, cursive flourish at the end.

Edward P. Wojnaroski, Sr.
State Representative
71st Legislative District