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January 9, 2008

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell, Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
225 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Rendell:

I would like to ask that you carefully consider increasing funding for the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts in the 2008-2009 Commonwealth Budget and the next two fiscal years by \$2 million each fiscal year.

It has been brought to my attention that current funding for the Council has not allowed the Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts (PPA) program to provide adequate grants to the organizations it supports - especially groups in the rural northern tier of the Commonwealth. This is especially troublesome given the fact that expenditures by arts and cultural organizations leverage significant additional spending throughout the region - spending that supports local restaurants, hotels, retail stores, and other businesses. A recent study conducted by the Bradford County Regional Arts Council with the Americans for the Arts concluded that arts and cultural organizations in Bradford County which spend \$1.84 million annually leverage \$2.06 million in additional spending by their audiences. I believe anyone would conclude that this is a healthy return on investment which the Commonwealth should continue to encourage by adequate funding.

Thank you for your consideration of additional funding for the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts in the Commonwealth's budget for this year and in the future.

Sincerely,

Matthew E. Baker
State Representative
68th Legislative District

MEB:wwr

cc. Brooks Eldredge-Martin, Executive Director
Bradford County Regional Arts Council