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July 18, 2017

The Honorable Robert DeLeo
Speaker of the House
State House, Room 356
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Stanley Rosenberg
President of the Senate
State House, Room 332
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Jeffrey Sanchez, Chair
House Committee on Ways and Means
State House, Room 243
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Karen Spilka, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
State House, Room 212
Boston, MA 02133

RE: Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), line item 0640-0300

Dear Speaker DeLeo, Senate President Rosenberg, Chairman Sanchez, and Chairwoman Spilka:

We respectfully request your support for a veto override to restore funding in the Fiscal Year 2018 budget for the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Specifically, we ask that the House and the Senate override Governor Baker's veto that reduced line item 0640-0300 by \$1,876,000.

With restoring the funding approved by the Legislature, the Mass Cultural Council draft budget for fiscal year 2018 would allow the agency to continue its programs that help revitalize our downtowns, make art more accessible to everyone, young and old, and build stronger communities. If Governor Baker's veto stands, the Massachusetts Cultural Council will be forced to slash grants and possibly eliminate programs.

Mass Cultural Council puts creativity to work for the citizens of Massachusetts and makes thousands of grants directly to nonprofit cultural organizations, schools, communities, and artists, through funding programs that use arts, sciences, and humanities to build strong, diverse, livable communities. The beneficiaries of these programs comprise a cross-section of the population and citizens in Massachusetts cities and towns.

Mass Cultural Council supports nearly 400 nonprofit arts, humanities, and science organizations through its Cultural Investment Portfolio. These organizations have a \$2 billion total economic impact, support 62,000 jobs, and generate more than \$100 million in revenue for the Commonwealth and its cities and towns—supporting other public services that sustain the quality of life in our cities and towns and attract new business and workers. Its operating support grants are a vital source of support for these organizations that leverage private dollars.

“There are few places in America as rich with culture as Massachusetts,” the letter states. “From Boston to the Berkshires, from Cape Ann to Cape Cod, our state boasts an array of exceptional cultural organizations, beautiful and distinctive communities, and thousands of talented artists and educators. Mass Cultural Council nurtures this cultural life, so it is imperative that we continue to provide the agency with the necessary resources to continue the great work it does in the Commonwealth.

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Thank you for your consideration and continued support for these priorities and your efforts to preserve and support the creative economy in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

Representative Cory Atkins, 14th Middlesex

House Chair, Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development

Senator Adam Hinds, Berkshire, Hampshire, Franklin, and Hampden

Senate Chair, Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development

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