



Advocate Creativity.

Dear Senate President Chandler, Speaker DeLeo, Chairwoman Spilka, and Chairman Sánchez,

From our world-class facilities to our neighborhood arts centers and community playhouses, arts and culture have connected communities and built a vibrant, thriving economy across the Commonwealth. Our cultural venues are often the anchor of a neighborhood, making our cities and towns exceptional places to live, work, play, and visit.

Yet every year, our cultural facilities continue to age. With hundreds of thousands of visitors each year, our venues are subject to wear and tear and ever-changing building codes, and require vigilance to make sure they are accessible to all.

Created by the Massachusetts Legislature in 2007, the Cultural Facilities Fund has helped restore many of our Commonwealth's most treasured historical and cultural landmarks, and has helped fund visionary capital projects that revitalize our communities.

Over the past ten years, the demand for planning and development resources provided by the Cultural Facilities Fund has increased exponentially, outpacing supply. In a 2017 Massachusetts Cultural Council survey, 169 organizations reported \$114 million in essential capital projects through 2019.

As part of the Economic Development Bond Bill, we request that the Legislature reauthorize the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund for five years at \$75 million.

- **Investment builds the state's creative community.**
Since its start in 2007, the Cultural Facilities Fund has awarded grants of \$110 million to 853 projects across the Commonwealth. These grants benefit organizations of every size and every region of Massachusetts, support individual artists and arts education, and revitalize our downtowns.
- **Investment creates jobs and drives the economy.**
The arts and cultural organizations behind Cultural Facilities Fund projects employ more than 7,000 workers and generate \$1.7 billion in annual economic activity through organizational spending. In addition, these projects have hired over 25,500 architects, engineers, contractors, and construction workers between 2007 and 2017.
- **Investment increases tourism.**
More than 16 million people visit organizations receiving these grants

annually. For every visitor to our cultural facilities, an additional \$27.32 goes to the local economy, including restaurants and local businesses.

CC:

The Honorable Eric P. Lesser, Chair, Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies

The Honorable Joseph P. Wagner, Chair, Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies

The Honorable John F. Keenan, Chair, Senate Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditure and State Assets

The Honorable Antonio Cabral, Chair, House Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditure and State Assets

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Isabella Stewart Gardner
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Massachusetts Symphony
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Artistic Director
Merrimack Repertory
Theatre

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Merrimack Repertory
Theatre

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Old North Foundation

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