



Strengthening arts, culture,
and creative expression as the
tools to cultivate a better
California for all.

Gavin Newsom, **Governor**
Danielle Brazell, **Executive Director**
2750 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 300, Sacramento CA 95833
(916) 322-6555 | www.arts.ca.gov

MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL

Friday, May 24, 2024
12:00 – 4:00 P.M.

On Location/Virtual Hybrid Meeting

Japanese American National Museum
100 North Central Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90012

The members of the California Arts Council convened in Los Angeles and via web conference to discuss and vote on various items as listed in the minutes below.

Council Members Present In-Person:

Roxanne Messina Captor, Chair
Leah Goodwin, Vice Chair
Vicki Estrada
Roy Hirabayashi
Olivia Raynor

Council Members Present Remotely:

Gerald Clarke (joined at 2 p.m.)
Caleb Duarte
Ellen Gavin

Council Members Absent:

Alex Israel
Phil Mercado
Nicola Miner

Arts Council Staff Present:

Danielle Brazell, Executive Director
Ayanna Kiburi, Deputy Director
Carissa Gutierrez, Public Affairs Director
Kristin Margolis, Director of Programs
Kimberly Brown, Public Affairs Specialist

Mason Diab, Council Liaison
Qiana Moore, Outreach & Events Coordinator
Rebecca Ratzkin, Equity Measures & Evaluation Manager
Zachary Hill, IT Associate
Steve Mok, Graphic Designer
Amy Garrett, Arts Program Manager
Elisa Gollub, Arts Program Manager
Josy Miller, Arts Program Manager

1. Call to Order

Chair Messina Captor called the meeting to order at 12:08 p.m.

2. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum

Council Liaison Diab called the roll and established a quorum, with 8 councilmembers present.

3. Land and People's Acknowledgement

Vice Chair Goodwin provided a personalized land acknowledgement to honor Native and Indigenous people and communities from the Los Angeles area.

4. Opening Remarks and Community Agreements

Chair Messina Captor welcomed the attendees and acknowledged the interpreters in the room and the parliamentarian.

Andrea Burroughs, Director of JANM welcomed attendees and provided a history of the space.

Chair Messina Captor and Executive Director Brazell read the Council's community agreements.

5. DISCUSSION: May Revise Proposal - Relocate the California Arts Council within the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development

Presentation

Executive Director Danielle Brazell presented on the history of the California Arts Council and provided an overview of the proposal in the Governor's May Revision to relocate the California Arts Council within the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz).

Public comment

Live Public Comment:

Gabriel Gutiérrez
Arts for LA and MoFundamentals

Hello everyone, my name is Gabriel Gutiérrez. Here on behalf of Arts for L.A. and also MoFundamentals. I'm going to start off by saying (speaking in Purépecha); that's "Hello, everyone." in Purépecha -- Indigenous to Michoacan, part of my lineage. And I'm here right on behalf of organizations like Arts for L.A. who agree that the CAC could benefit from adjusted infrastructure and additional support. However, we're not confident that a relocation is a solution, nor is this the right time. Our focus should be on long-term sustainability to small arts orgs through critical grant programs like many of the ones that support us, right? And pilots like the Equitable Payroll Fund. I'm also here on behalf of MoFundamentals, the only foster adoptee-led dance program in L.A., in California, in the United States. Since 2013, it is thanks in part to CAC grant funding that I have supported 50 foster adoptee artists on the verge of recidivism, houselessness, and food insecurity through living-wage contracts just in these last three years. I'm here to oppose these cuts to instead ask for deeper commitments, right? Honoring arts workers, artists and their right to living wages. Overall, I am urging state leaders to oppose relocation of the California Arts Council under the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development and to restore funding for critical grant programs. This will make a difference not just for today, not just for tomorrow, but for the future of our arts and culture sector. (speaking in Purépecha) Thank you, everyone.

Mark Seldis
The Ghost Road Company

Hi everyone. My name is Mark Seldis, I'm the producing director of The Ghost Road Company and I'm also an adjunct professor at Loyola Marymount University and I've been working in the nonprofit arts community in Los Angeles for nearly 40 years. I stand with the Arts Council, support the Arts Council, I oppose the Governor's proposed budget cut for the Council, and the relocation. The budget cut coupled with proposed sweep of funding for the Equitable Payroll Fund represents a drastic 58% cut to all public arts funding and it's disproportionate. These cuts will have a devastating impact on the sector still reeling from the pandemic and other economic challenges. These arts organizations are in all of our communities and neighborhoods and serve a vital role. These theaters and music dance companies are struggling to stay afloat. The impact of cutting this funding and cutting funding for the Equitable Payroll Fund will eliminate what could be a lifeline for arts jobs, which may be eliminated or not created at all. These arts organizations are grassroots and communities all over the state provide an anchor of arts participation and experience in all of your neighborhoods.

Julie Baker
California for the Arts

Madame Chair, members of the Council. Julie Baker, CEO of California for the Arts, a Statewide and Regional Network grantee and advocacy organization here today representing over the 15,000 arts nonprofits across the state delivering essential services to their communities that unless stopped are threatened by the funding cuts proposed by the Governor in his May Revise and specifically the \$10 million cut to your agency. While I know we want to talk about the move to GO-Biz, we believe that should be discussed in a longer legislative process that should be introduced sometime in a longer process, not in the May Revise. If it's net neutral, we don't understand why it needs to happen now. The \$10 million cut, however, no matter where you are located, is detrimental to the CAC. Would put grant funding below the 2000 level without adjusting for inflation. While California's General Fund has more than doubled. CAC's grant-making budget has not increased in six years. While we understand every agency and program must play its part to balance the budget, this agency is already in a cut position and should be spared. Furthermore, should this cut go through, California will be 45th in United States in per capita funding for the arts behind Florida, Alabama, Texas, Mississippi, and the list goes on. Frankly, this would be a shocking predicament for the state that represents 25 of the U.S. creative industries and has made investments such as the Creative Economy Working Group and the Creative Core. Moves that indicate the state values the significant contributions of artists, culture bearers, and nonprofit organizations. As you're aware, over 50 percent of grant applications were denied last year due to insufficient funding, and today you must make excruciating decisions based on this proposed budget cut. Decisions that could affect the most vulnerable nonprofit arts organizations among us. Ones that are providing after-school programs to youth and services to veterans with PTSD. Programs offering hope for the unhoused and incarcerated, providing community cohesion during polarizing times and cultural vitality and economic stability to every community across California. Artists have long acted as our second responders in a crisis and were there for us during COVID. This is not the time to sideline them, but to look to them for innovation and nimbleness. We've long underutilized this valuable workforce and California should understand how critical the arts are to community health and our state's economic output. We are also deeply concerned that the State of California is sending a signal to communities and to our youth that creativity doesn't matter. In an age where we're trying to fight the impact of AI and continued automation, this is not the time to disinvest in creativity. Many parts of the arts nonprofit ecosystem are still trying to recover. I'm going to skip that. I don't know what time I have; I can't see. (off camera: Time's up.) If Legislature rejects this proposal we have a fighting chance to get this funding restored. So we ask that every grantee of the CAC, every potential grantee, and all the constituents and arts nonprofits serve, join us to let your representatives know that arts are essential, arts nonprofits provide a public good, and are a smart appropriation for the state with massive return on investment.

Michael Angelo Camacho
San Diego Art Matters

I'm Michelangelo Camacho. I'm from San Diego with San Diego Art Matters. I'd like to start off by introducing myself, a little bit of my personal story to the Council here and then I will go into the work that San Diego Art Matters does. So, if you have not met me before, I was born in a small farming village in the Philippines where missionaries corps and volunteers would come because it experienced extreme poverty. I eventually settled in San Diego where in Imperial Beach, it's southernmost beach. Experiences a lot of things that Tijuana experiences and although it's gentrifying it was a place. Some people might consider it a "community of concern", a place where on the street I lived, the Del Sols gangs, the Imperial Beach gang, the Nestor gang, Nestor was the neighborhood I lived in, they collided, and I have a very distinct memory of a fellow student, he was in the AVID program, not showing up to class because she was murdered at the community center across the street from where we both went to church. So this is my story, and you can only imagine the type of chaos that was – that my neighborhood was experiencing and I might have been experiencing within the walls of my home. So what the arts to me is, I don't know if you can tell, I'm wearing this green ribbon. It is Mental Health Awareness Month. Lime green means "mental health awareness". And what I want to say is that this is what the arts does. And one of the things that concerns me about the proposal is that it moves us into under-economic development, which is a lens. But we have our own cultural lens. And we have our own set of social impact. To be moved under economic development, means it's what we're experiencing in the county in San Diego, being judged under the economic lens when we have our own lens to be under. There is precedence to have an Office of Racial Justice and Equity, just like there should be precedence to have a separate Arts and Culture Council and Department. So what we do at San Diego Art Matters is we advocate for our region. The huge region that spans as far north, nearly to Orange County, all the way down to the border. We're very grateful for all the good work that you, the Council, are doing. We received \$4.75 million through Creative California Corps alone through our Far South Border North program, and that would not have been possible if not for the hard work you do. So, if you have any power as an advisory board to oppose these reductions, please use that power. Thank you.

Ada Shido
San Diego Arts and Culture Commission

Hello, my name is Ada. I'm a youth Commissioner for San Diego's newly formed Arts and Culture Commission and a coordinator for an art nonprofit. However today, I come as an artist, an arts advocate, and someone whose existence is proof of the healing power of art. I discovered art when I experienced my first depressive episode. Although I felt powerless at the hands of my depression. Sorry, I'm nervous. Okay. All

right. Although I felt powerless at the hands of my depression, I found solace in my sketch book and the lines contained within it. It was then I realized that even if my mental health illness could take away my happiness and my ability to develop meaningful connections, it couldn't take away my will to create. Since then, I've strived to make art accessible to youth through free programs, community workshops, and opportunities for youth to meet artists who look like them. The organization I work for was able to accomplish this through the CAC's CYD, Jump StArt, Impact Projects grants. I've seen the impact of this funding on people, especially in those who need more direction, people who need a reason to stay strong, or simply a place where they can do something fun with their peers. Last year, I joined San Diego County's Arts and Culture Commission to offer my experiences as a youth artist. We have been operating without a budget and have relied on partnerships, money from our own pockets, and our creativity. We are still working towards being included in the upcoming budget to achieve our strategic vision, but the significant cut in arts funding could, frankly, jeopardize that. This cut in funding is devastating and I'm sure everyone in this room feels the same because we all have our own stories of love for the arts. Please continue to fight for the arts and know that every penny of funding goes towards nurturing our communities and the dreams of countless individuals. Thank you for your dedication towards the arts.

Ulises Rodriguez
Arts Connection

My name is Ulises Rodriguez. I am the associate director for Arts Connection and I'm here representing the San Bernardino County as well as Riverside County, as well as the entire Inland Empire in California. I am a foreigner, I was born in Mexico City in a place where we have arts as human right, rather than a privilege. Coming here at the age of 14 and advocating for arts all over the county, doing therapeutic arts for kids, representing my community, and being an activist, which, I now, I call myself an "activist" because of the advocacy that we do it is important to continue the fight and to continue to work for the community that represents us. A lot of people don't understand the arts is a huge, vital driver for economy. That's why people go to places because they want to leave, they want to understand. They want to be able to know the type of cultures and traditions that only art is able to preserve. Right now in Arts Connection, we have several programs like after-school programs, we have the Creative Corps that was available because of the great funding that you guys have provided, and none of that would have been possible, having \$7 million to be able to present to the community to share with 53 artists who, \$7 million sounds like a lot of money but it's not. But with such little funds, many were artists are able to reach out to community, create spaces where community felt welcome. Create resources where artists were able to start their new business, create relationships, and understand that arts can be a great successful career path. This is why I advocate for. It was just right before the pandemic, I came here with my own projects and to perform right here on those steps. And when the

pandemic hit, a lot of my colleagues and artists, we didn't have sources to continue our work and had to find other types of jobs, but our passion and our art never died. And I find myself here once again celebrating the arts, but also advocating and opposing these changes for our communities. We need to be able to work together we need to be able to advocate for more funds and more opportunities and more equality. Those foundations that will bring sustainability for all of us. There's a saying that says, "Cuando la cultura muere, la genta muere" and it means "when culture dies, people die." And the only thing that preserves arts is us, the artists. So please continue to advocate for that. Thank you.

Alejandro Gutierrez Chavez
Arts Connection

Good afternoon, Madame Chair, members of the Council, and community members of course. It's an honor and privilege to share space with you all and advocate for the arts. My name is Alejandro Gutierrez Chavez, and I'm the resident of Fontana in San Bernardino County and executive director of Arts Connection, the State-Local Partner of San Bernardino County. I'm here today to voice my strong support for arts, full funding for the arts and CAC because the CAC funding plays a vital role for our communities, not only in San Bernardino County but also Riverside County in the region where we're from. Where I've been raised and a product of the Inland Empire. For context, San Bernardino is home to over 2.1 million residents and the largest county by area in the United States. We are the fastest growing and we're also the fastest growing region in California. As someone who grew up in a low-income, minority-majority, and working-class community within San Bernardino County, I have witnessed firsthand the impact of the CAC funding in my home communities. The CAC funding supports programs that reach underserved and rural areas, offering critical opportunities. Many times the only opportunities for creative expression, learning, and cultural engagement. It really does serve as a lifeline for cultural engagement and for artists and creatives, allowing them to feel seen and to pursue their passion and make a living doing what they love. Governor Newsom's proposed 58% cut to the arts funding will have devastating consequences for our small rural nonprofits that serve the most vulnerable communities in San Bernardino County. For context, the Inland Empire, we do not have private equity or deep access to deep foundational support that some areas in California do. For example, the Inland Empire capital foundation spending on nonprofits is \$25.55 compared to California statewide average of \$262.99. CAC funding, and that's for all nonprofits, now imagine how much goes to funding for arts and culture in the Inland Empire. Really, the CAC funding is a lifeline for the futures of many in the Inland Empire, and as we continue to grow in the Inland Empire and we're the fastest growing region, the arts has played a vital role in ensuring there's an inclusive development and all communities are represented in the rapidly changing environments in the Inland Empire. For example, programs like Arts Connection Environmental Justice Through Printmaking program,

which was funded by CAC's Impact work, Impact grant makes artists. It's a collaboration between artists working with The People's Collective for Environmental Justice and building awareness of the climate crisis that we're currently living in in the Inland Empire. This collaboration is building upon the work that -- thank you so much for the opportunity and yeah. Fund the arts, CAC.

Kevin Eberle-Noel
Redlands Symphony Association

Thank you, you are hearing a lot about the Inland Empire today. Aren't you excited? My name is Kevin Eberle-Noel; I'm the executive director of the Redlands Symphony Association located in the eastern Inland Empire in San Bernardino County. We are the gateway to Palm Springs, we are, basically, the last large city before you hit Palm Springs, equidistant between Los Angeles and the Coachella Valley. Moving the California Arts Council into GO-Biz is a concerning step for organizations like mine. Our budget hovers just under \$1 million annually, and we serve a population that the average economic impact of that, of those households and the average economic income of those households is under \$70,000 for a household of four. We have a lot of responsibility to serve, not just our immediate communities and partner with our friends in greater San Bernardino and greater Riverside, but also to allow our programming to flourish outside of those areas and unincorporated areas. It is difficult enough to get small business appropriations and small business attention in San Bernardino County, whereas my colleagues have already mentioned to you, it is quite difficult with the lack of private philanthropy and lack of infrastructure when we're competing with larger counties like San Diego County and Los Angeles County and Orange County. Having the California Arts Council is our lifeline. If that is absorbed into GO-Biz, our concern with smaller organizations, and I will just state here, within 20 miles, there are three orchestras. There's the Redlands Symphony, the San Bernardino Symphony, and the Riverside County Philharmonic. All of whom have small budgets, all of whom rely on California Arts Council funding, and all of whom are concerned that if this funding is reappropriated and in theory equitably available within GO-Biz, it will disproportionately affect, not only our artists programs but our educational programs and the other programs that we're able to do. With no offset from private Philanthropy and very little government infrastructure in an already underfunded county. So on behalf of Redlands Symphony, which is who I can speak for, we do oppose the move into GO-Biz. Thank you very much.

Yulissa Mendoza
Arts Connection

Hello, my name is Yulissa Mendoza, and I'm currently a resident of San Bernardino, which is located in the largest county by land area in the US. I'm a photographer for Latine and Indigenous musical artists and brands as well as the director of Arts Connection – arts director, sorry – where I'm so lucky to serve my community through our Artists in Residency program and studio space. I'm here today to voice why our community needs full arts funding for CAC, as the funding helps us create a sense of community, heals, and is a catalyst for economic growth. As someone who grew up in a low-income, unincorporated, minority-majority farming community within San Bernardino County, I have bear witness to and personally experienced the impact CAC funding has had on my peers and my communities. Growing up, my family and I would drive to other cities to enjoy all of their arts festivals and performing arts and be able go on a basic leisurely walk. Over the past few -- leisurely stroll because of the lack of happenings and infrastructure within our city. Over the past few years, artists have served as a catalyst for the community and economic prosperity for my San Bernardino. I used to say, "I'm going downtown" and I would be referring to L.A., and now I mean San Bernardino. For instance, years ago, Saturday in San Bernardino would entail either staying home or driving really far out just for basic fun. Today a Saturday means I can drive 10 minutes and start my day off with an art walk, head over to the park filled with a lot of murals and public art, walk around Downtown and peek into all of its new storefronts, attend a performance, and end my day with gallery openings. None of the above would be possible without the plethora of artists supported by the CAC funding. Programs like Estudio Aire, which has been supported by the CAC funding, has had a ripple effect in my community, providing platforms for artists to grow in their artistry while giving back to the City of San Bernardino. It contributes to a healthier community and serves as the foundation for folks to be able to be full-time artists and live a life that they were told was never possible. For example, one of the first ever artists in residences two years ago, Cesar Garcia, started with a dream of working on a large-scale woodcut print in community. What started off as just him and I transformed into 12 artists over the span of two months, which ultimately led to the first-ever printmaking collective, Grafica Nocturna, in our community. Through Estudio Aire, we have supported the dreams of folks as individuals and collectives. Through the CAC funding, the collective has been able to continue the work as artists by hosting workshops at schools, community spaces, parks, museums, campaigns, festivals that empower folks to have voice their own community and provide them with the tools to do so. The CAC funding goes a long way for us in San Bernardino, and I encourage and I urge continuous funding for equity-driven programs, which are key for us. Thank you for your time and space.

Liz Johnson
Grand Vision Foundation

Hello everyone, I am here as a representative of Grand Vision Foundation a small arts organization in San Pedro, CA, which is always also explaining that we are also part of the City of Los Angeles. I oppose the Arts Council's relocation under GO-Biz, and ask that the governor restore funding for the Arts Council's grant programs. From the position of being an executive director of a small community-based arts organization, I want to say, as a lot of you are aware, we are expecting quite a few cuts in the next few years, and it does seem like they are going to be difficult years. Grand Vision is a 26-year-old arts provider that, and we're very grateful to the Arts Council for helping us grow our music education program to now serving over 3,000 very low-income students in LAUSD, and all of our teachers are employees. We are just finishing a round of end-of-year recitals, and so many of the parents and teachers, as well as students even in their own way, have called us a stabilizing influence after the pandemic. Last time, we received funds, I just thought I'd throw it out there because it might resonate. We did receive \$65,000. Now, even with the current grant we're applying, it's \$25,000. Every dollar really counts with a small, small organization, and you know, I just feel like we really even with Prop 28, as so many of you know, we still haven't seen changes in our school district, our massive school district. In fact, it sometimes seems like there's less music and arts programming available that the school is providing, and they're even more reliant on the outside providers like our organization and some of the folks I see here. We think that the agency... Oh, I just wanted to say, I'm sure everyone here is proud and highly aware that arts are a tremendous source of economic wealth for our state, but we do not think we belong under a business department. I think it's death of 1,000 cuts. They, you know, you change the leadership, you change the highest-level people, and slowly, you know, you just slide that those that work into a less and less important position, and I would never want to see that with the California Arts Council, which has been just the leading advocate in California for all the arts programming. And you get into the details with so many organizations throughout our great state, so we're really grateful for what you do, and we want to keep the Arts Council independent, and we want the budget to be restored. Thank you.

Hannah Velasco
Arts Connection

Hello, California Arts Council, my name is Hannah Velasco and I'm here with Arts Connection the arts council of San Diego County. I'm an artist, a small-business owner, and I'm on track to graduate from Cal State San Bernardino with bachelor's degree in Studio Arts in 2027. Just some context of about who I am. In elementary and middle school, I was fortunate to have had exposure to the arts and had wonderful teachers who I looked up to. Since then, my dream was to become an art teacher. However, the sad truth is that the arts are underfunded and undervalued. Upon my research, (sound is inaudible) I spent two years (sound is inaudible). I ended up dropping out and jumping from job to job for another two years until I found Arts Connection, where they had hiring

for community managers around the program Arts Avenue. And it changed the trajectory of my life. Watching the impact the arts had on students was had was, like (sound is inaudible) shown on a big screen at Regal Theater in San Bernardino, which was such a rewarding experience. We're hoping to make this an annual festival per the request of the community. I plan to submit a short film for the 2025 festival, but we need funding from CAC. We need our programming in the Inland Empire. It enriches the community, brings us together, sparks deep conversation, and, with the CAC funding, supplies jobs. Arts Connection is in stage where we are growing. There are many community members who want to be a part of the mission of Arts Connection, the 85% funding cut would directly affect the opportunity of growth and working with more artists. Artists aren't going anywhere. We are hard workers, innovative and important. The unfortunate disconnect is that many community members believe that the arts are self-supporting when in reality the arts are funded by nonprofits, restricted grants, and private funding. By cutting the funding you're cutting jobs, organizations, and most importantly, you're cutting the dreams and pathways for future artists. Thank you for listening.

Andrea Bonales
Arts Connection

Good afternoon, California Arts Council, my name is Andrea Banalis; I'm here on behalf of Arts Connection. I'm their arts education program coordinator and I've been working there for about four years now. A little bit about me, I'm a 24-year-old Chicana artist, animator, and filmmaker from Rialto, California. And, yes, I'm here to address some concerns regarding the CAC going into GO-Biz, and the 58% funding cut that will negatively affect the arts programming within our region. I'm a full-time student at Cal State Fullerton, and currently I'm studying to earn by bachelor's in Entertainment, Art, and Animation. I'm on track to graduate next fall. Ever since I could remember, It has been my goal to become a working artist. As I said, I'm the arts education program supervisor for Arts Correction and I'm currently managing one of our largest programs, Arts Avenue. A little bit about Arts Avenue, it's an after-school arts program where we hire community teaching artists to go into schools K-12 and we offer free artists workshops to the students, who have little to no arts resources within their schools. We launched Arts Avenue in February 2022 with San Bernardino City Unified School District's Expanded Learning. We began servicing four school sites with four community teaching artists. Currently, we service 19 community teaching artists and 17 school sites. This year, we have connected with over 4,000 students and counting. The relationships that we have built with the students, their parents, and the school sites have been a vital component to the growth of our program and the growth within our community. We have had multiple inquiries from organizations, school districts within our region, but unfortunately, we have had to place the requests on hold as there is not

enough funding to expand access to our programs elsewhere. Lastly, I had the honor of working with the Inland Film Festival as program coordinator. We've hosted our festival last month in April; we had 164 submissions all within San Bernardino, Riverside, and L.A. counties. With help of San Bernadino Regal, we screened 129 films on four separate screens within the span of eight hours. One of our tasks was to provide 10 jobs on the day. We exceeded that number, and half of our team were volunteers. Our team only expected a max of 500 attendees that day, and our number doubled the day of. Many asked if this was our first festival and when next year's was going to happen and they wanted to make sure that they submitted some films. For the past four years, I've dedicated my time to the Inland Empire community. For the past four years, I've seen it change, revolutionize, and thrive because of the arts. The Inland Empire is an embodiment of a connected community, connectedness because of arts. Hence our opposition to the 58% funding cut to arts and culture. With the arts, we're able to make positive changes, gateways to careers, and careers that don't involve toxic air pollution like hundreds of football fields worth of warehousing within our backyards. I have provided you with statistics, the facts, and now we ask you provide our people with what they need. Thank you so much.

Oswaldo Heredia
Garcia Center for the Arts

Hello, my name is Oswaldo, I'm the executive director for the Garcia Center for the Arts in San Bernardino. I support the California Arts Council, and I wanted to voice my disagreement with the budget cuts to the state agency. (someone off camera: "Can you slow down a bit?") Oh Sorry. And I think that the move to relocate the agency under the Governor's office is too hasty if it's scheduled to happen by July 1st. I think there's too many questions that still need to be answered, and if we're talking about economic development, I want to share the good that CAC funding has done for the IE , a region that is growing and whose economy has been overwhelmed by the logistics industry but whose quality of life is being protected thanks to the arts. So, I just want to say, I was originally born and raise here in L.A., but due to high cost of living, my family chose to move to the Inland Empire. I have now fallen in love with the community of San Bernardino, and I can say that I feel incredibly privileged to call the IE home, a community that has challenged me and allowed me to mature into the person that I am today. San Bernardino has seen its challenges, from filing bankruptcy to being considered one of the most dangerous cities in the United States. But despite these difficulties, San Bernardino is one of the most beautiful places that I've had the pleasure of experiencing due in large part to the home-grown artists and creatives that have shown the tenacity and resiliency to build a foundation for the future of the Inland Empire. Funding in the arts is crucial for continuing to strengthen our communities and

for people to be truly acknowledged and represented by giving them the opportunities to tell their own stories, to share their culture, and to keep their traditions alive. I have been so blessed to serve as the director of the Garcia Center and to see firsthand the talent, the skill, the love, the time, and the energy that has gone into building our community. The people are investing and for any relationship to remain healthy it needs to be reciprocal. We need to make sure that the State continues to fully fund its people, and continue to fully invest in its people, and in the arts specifically, because the arts do not operate in a vacuum. It is interwoven into our everyday life, how we move in the everyday world and interact with one another. Reflecting on our human condition and how we have similar experiences, from struggles and fears to hopes and dreams. And our reminder that we are all connected and that we're not alone in this world. And I just want to end by shouting out to my team: Yulissa, Hannah, Dre, Ulises, Alejandro, and other people also here representing the IE. We're the IE strong. Thank you so much.

Bob Lehman
San Diego Museum Council

Hi, I'm Bob Lehman from San Diego Museum Council, representing 81 museums from our county and 6,000 employees and 6,000 volunteers. Thank you for the work you do all yearlong supporting arts workers around the county, around the state. In proposing that the Council moves to Go-Pro (chuckles). Well, maybe that's where they'll be next, But to start judging it based on economics, maybe that's not the worst thing that can happen. But the thing is, if that's the case, then why are they taking money away and not investing. We're a great investment, and if that's where they're moving us, they shouldn't be taking money away. The most recent economics report from San Diego, just from this past year, was \$1.4 billion in economic impact, and that was just really a small percentage of our arts organizations. Just this week, we kicked off Memorial Day weekend in San Diego, kicked off tourism season. They talked about a \$2 billion industry. We are that tourism industry. When people come to visit a city, based for arts, they stay longer and they spend more money than when we come to a baseball game or for a beach. We are that tourism industry, so if they want to move us and base it on how we impact tourism and how we impact the economics, then invest in us that way. Because we are a great investment; we bring back more return. So instead of taking money away, they should be investing more if they're going to move us into that office. Thank you.

Carene Rose Mekertichyan
Independent Shakespeare Company

Thank you all so much. Hello, everyone, my name is Carene Rose Mekertichyan, and I'll be speaking in direct opposition to the GO-Biz. Hello, everyone, I'm an activist, educator, and proud Black-Armenian Angeleno. It is truly difficult to capture the ways in which the arts have deeply impacted my life because it is my passion, my tool for action,

and the way I give back to my community, but I will try. Coming from an extremely low-income background, It was the arts access that I was afforded both in and after school at Ivanhoe Elementary and as part of the free Saturday Conservatory for the Arts program at Cal State L.A. for L.A.U.S.D. students that laid the foundation for my growth into the performer I am today, who received a full ride to major in Theater at an Ivy League institution, and I'm now able to use my art to bring about the empathy, social change, and access for those like myself. I serve as the artistic associate for social justice at the Independent Shakespeare Company, a past California Arts Council grantee. I work with ISC, not only as a performer, but on staff in community engagement and social justice-centered programming and activation. In my day job, I have the privilege of using my artistic gifts and expertise to work as a teaching artist for About Productions, Center Theater Group, and Creative Acts, providing arts access and arts programming rooted in civic engagement and social justice to LAUSD students and young incarcerated folks at each of those arts organizations that have also benefited greatly from California Arts Council grants. The number of e-mails and activations I receive from nearly every arts entity, including the Equity Payroll Fund, I'm connected to after the announcement of these cuts is a testament to its gravity. Make no mistake, this cut to critical funding would potentially devastate every aspect of my life, and I'm not unique. Look around you at all of the arts workers pleading with you to stop these potential cuts. The arts are integral to California's GDP and that work starts with supporting young people with arts access and providing them free opportunities to see and engage with accessible art and theater. Which is found at the core of what we do with the Griffith Park Free Shakespeare Festival, which provides free accessible programming to upwards of 40,000 Angelenos every summer and a critical living wage to theater arts workers, which is unfortunately a rarity in L.A. due to lack of funding. As you all know these cuts are not only disproportionate but follow in the historical pattern of arts being deemed unimportant and not essential. We all start somewhere, and arts and culture drive 80% of California's economy, \$290 billion revenue, and supports over 800,000 jobs. In what world is California going to be 45th in the nation for arts funding? I urge you to look to the future because these cuts would have devastating effects for generations to come. Thank you.

Jennifer Caballero
California Association of Museums

Thank you, Madame Speaker, and we at the California Association of Museums where I am, I'm Jennifer Caballero, I live here in Pasadena and I pretty much scrapped everything I was just about to say because I came here not knowing enough about what was going to happen with this GO- Biz relocation, and I found myself very moved by what Ann said about this particular location (Japanese American National Museum) being a *relocation center*. And when something is suddenly forced onto a group that they're being told that they're going to be relocated, it's troubling. So I'm very chilled by this possible effect. This proposal is shocking, and there should be more people in this

room opposed to this. I feel like looking at GO-Biz's objectives: job growth, economic development, and business assistance efforts, *great!* Those are all great. Museums. Working with the California Association of Museums, we're economic powerhouses in our communities. We lead to a huge tech space, I think, at the last time I checked it was, before the pandemic, it was something like \$1.5 billion in taxes. We are already doing this work; I don't understand the point of relocation. So, I really am here to say, please remain independent as the California Arts Council. The significance as arts and culture is key. The scope-creeper of this surprise announcement is very troubling to me as arts administrator. So, I'm going to release the rest of my time but I'm really, I'm glad to be here. Thank you for the opportunity.

Genevieve Fowler
Community Partners

Hi, my name is Genevieve Fowler, and I'm representing Community Partners, who serves as an administrative organization for the California Arts Council's California Creative Corps program. In Los Angeles and Orange County communities located in the lowest quartiles of the California Healthy Places index. Our program supports artists and culture bearers working at the intersections of cultural issues. Just as of today, only 10 months into our program, the outcomes include over 1,000 jobs created, 33 artists and culture bearers supported, 33 community-based organizations works advanced, and seven social media PSAs on critical issues, such as COVID-19 prevention, climate mitigation and emergency preparedness, city engagement around election participation, and community engagement and social justice. Artists are affecting all of these issues and more. The effects artists can have on increasing impact and awareness in our communities is why they are essential and why we must maintain our current State support for arts and culture and our current structure. Programs such as this and those other programs in the California Creative Corps are not possible without the support of public dollars and without the deeply qualified staff at the California Arts Council as it currently stands. So thank you for your support and we hope that support will be continued as this impacts all of our programming, all of our artists, and all of our culture bearers are deeply-deeply essential. Thank you so much.

Council discussion

Council Members discussed a number of points:

- Concern that the Council would be lost in the larger organization of GO-Biz.
- Conversations with legislative staff indicated a positive intent to this proposal, but that it was unclear how the Council's decision-making authority would be impacted and whether there had been enough study on the potential impacts of this move.

- The proposal feels quick and unplanned, and there were questions about how this move would benefit the state.
- Members noted that they had not received enough information about what the move to GO-Biz would signify. They would like to hear from the field and legislators on this matter.
- The proposal feels like reductionist approach without a full appreciation of the Council's contributions. There is a need for tangible data to communicate the Council's impact to the legislators.
- The offices within GO-Biz were read out loud to provide context.
- There was concern that adding another layer of bureaucracy would not help the agency advance the mission of the Arts Council.

At 1:50 p.m. Chair Messina Captor called for a brief 15-minute recess.

Chair Messina Captor called the meeting back to order at 2:07 p.m. and invited Lauren Pizer-Mains, Consultant to the Joint Committee on the Arts for Senator Ben Allen to provide remarks:

Ms. Pizer-Mains shared her concerns on the proposed move to GO-Biz. She also encouraged members of the public to follow the guidance of California for the Arts to lobby legislators and advocate for reduced cuts.

6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

Presentation:

Executive Director Brazell and Deputy Director Kiburi presented an overview of the proposal in the Governor's May Revision to reduce funding to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance budget. The proposal includes a \$10 million reduction to Local Assistance, in addition to a projected 7.95% cut to all state agencies' operations budgets. They emphasized that the two proposed cuts are not related: the Local Assistance reduction would impact grant programs, and the Operations reduction would impact staffing, travel, etc.

Council Discussion:

Council Members discussed a few main points:

- They expressed their gratitude for the public comments that were submitted ahead of the meeting regarding the proposed cuts.
- The proposed cut felt disproportionate and inequitable, and that they felt confident that the reduction could be decreased.

Chair Messina Captor noted that she did not have enough information to judge whether going under GoBiz was the right decision for the CAC or not. She requested more

comprehensive facts. She acknowledged that with state deficit all agencies' budgets were being cut. She noted her hope that this cut would be reconsidered and not be as dramatic as expected for the agency to do the necessary work of keeping the arts alive in the state.

7. VOTING ITEM: Program Policy Committee Recommendations for revision of Program Guidelines

Presentation:

Councilmembers Clarke and Duarte presented a memo prepared by the Programs Policy Committee that presented proposed solutions to the potential budget cut. They also acknowledged that any solution would have downsides due to the size of the proposed cut, and reminded the group that the committee was acting in good faith to serve community and keep the CAC's focus on artists.

The memo included two recommendations:

1. The Programs Policy Committee recommends that the Council vote to close the General Operation Support (Gen-Ops) FY2024-25 grant program.

2. The Programs Policy Committee recommends that the Council vote to extend the grant application deadline from June 6 to June 20, 2024, for all open programs.
 - a. This recommendation is dependent on the outcome of the vote on the first recommendation.

Councilmembers Clarke and Duarte explained the reasoning behind each recommendation and presented Decision Support Tools for each recommendation as well.

Public Comment

Transcriptions of live public comment are as follows; written submissions are attached at the end.

Discussion

MOTION: Accept the recommendations of the Programs Policy Committee to close the Gen-Ops 24 program

- Moved by Councilmember Estrada, Seconded by Councilmember Clarke

The floor was opened for discussion.

Councilmember Estrada posed a question: How can we propose very real solutions when we don't know what the final cut will be?

Councilmember Clarke affirmed that, while the Council does not know exactly what the final cuts will be, there are cuts coming, and competition for grants will be even more intense and this conversation allowed the Council to be proactive.

The council discussed the following points:

- Recommended exploring other programs to close, not Gen-Ops or Impact Projects, instead advocating for reduced cuts to funding, and taking any cuts equitably across all programs.
- Proposed cuts to Local Assistance were seen as unfair.
- There was faith in the field's ability to advocate and lobby the legislature and recommended taking any potential cut equitably across all programs.
- Concerns were expressed about whether this conversation was premature, and that the Council could instead be discussing strategies for working with the Governor's office and Legislature to oppose the proposed cuts.
- As the grant application deadline is June 6, staff provided the Programs Policy Committee with information on how the proposed cuts would impact programs. An equal cut across all programs would still have a more significant impact on some smaller organizations.
- The proposals were the committee's attempt to look forward and be prepared for whatever comes, and there are many serious decisions to be made and the focus should be on minimizing disruption to the field.
- The council meeting was scheduled to respond to the reality that budget cuts are imminent and created an opportunity for the Council to respond proactively.
- A request to review 2-year agreements for Gen-Ops 2023 grants and make changes, which Executive Director Brazell explained would require legal guidance and late-term decisions that could have more impact on grant recipients.
- The Programs Policy Committee's affirmed their intention to uphold the 2-year awards that the Council has committed to, and that the second recommendation would allow new Gen-Ops applicants time to apply for other grants.
- Expressed opposition to cancelling the 2-year grants and asked for more information on what the impact of today's decisions might be.
- A request to review how CAC had responded to cuts like this in the past.

Chair Messina Captor summarized the discussion and then asked Council Liaison Diab to read the following into the record:

MOTION: Accept the recommendations of the Programs Policy Committee to close the GEN 24 program

- Moved by Councilmember Estrada, Seconded by Councilmember Clarke

VOTE:

YES: Councilmembers Messina Captor, Clarke, Duarte, Hirabayashi

NO: Councilmembers Estrada, Gavin, Goodwin, Raynor

ABSTAIN: 0

With 4 Yes votes and 4 No votes, the motion failed.

The second recommendation from the Programs Policy Committee was not taken up for a vote, as it was dependent on the outcome of the first recommendation.

8. Closing Remarks

Chair Messina Captor thanked the public for their turnout and their comments, and the Council and staff for their quick, hard work to put the meeting together.

9. Adjournment

Chair Messina Captor adjourned the meeting at 4:07 p.m.

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENT SUBMISSIONS – ALL ITEMS

- **Sarah Brothers (She/Her/Hers)**
Arts Council Santa Cruz County and Santa Cruz County ArtsNow, Santa Cruz County
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Schools, Arts Integration Training, Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action), JUMP StArts, State-Local Partnership, Statewide and Regional Networks
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council’s Local Assistance

I’m writing to urge you to reject the proposed cuts to arts education.

I understand CA is facing a significant budget deficit this year, and CAC is facing budget cuts, but the decision to cut arts education funding so dramatically will be catastrophic to youth-serving community-based afterschool arts organizations statewide - specifically those uplifting historically under-resourced communities of color. These programs have relied on CAC funding - in some cases for decades. Making such sudden cuts to their funding will surely end some of these powerful programs that have been a transformative and life changing force in the lives of the young people we serve across the state.

Prop 28 funding is now fueling a more equitable and sustainable future for arts ed in school during the day, and yet it only begins to address the enormous gap between all

students receiving the equitable arts education in all arts disciplines as Ed Code mandates.

We know that the CAC understands the value of arts ed in providing engaging learning and development for our youth, in building connected compassionate communities, and uplifting our creative young artists and arts appreciators across our state.

I am urging you to reassess your budget reduction plan and find a way to maintain arts ed funding as a budget priority.

- **Isabelle Tuncer (She/Her/Hers)**
El Sistema Santa Cruz/Pajaro Valley, Santa Cruz County
Current or Former Grantee: Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action)
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

I am writing on behalf of El Sistema Santa Cruz/Pajaro Valley Music Program to express our profound concern about the proposed cuts to arts education funding. These cuts would be catastrophic for community-based after-school programs like ours that uplift under-resourced communities through music. We have relied on California Arts Council funding for years, and such cuts will be difficult to absorb.

Arts education is a vital part of a well-rounded education, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and emotional expression while building discipline and teamwork. Many of our students rely on these programs for cultural enrichment and academic engagement.

We urge the California Arts Council to reconsider the proposed cuts and recognize the essential role of arts education in fostering a creative, inclusive, and prosperous society. Maintaining or increasing funding for arts education is an investment in the future of our children and the cultural vitality of our state.

- **Louise Steinman (She/Her/Hers)**
Los Angeles Institute for the Humanities, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Communities, Individual Artists Fellowships
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

Funding for the arts is essential for our communities' health in California. It is through the arts, funding artists and arts organizations, that we communicate positive strategies for dealing with the volatile pressures of our time. Keep California's arts funding vigorous! It sustains and betters our communities! Arts are essential, not an "extra." Encourage critical thinking, encourage creative problem-solving, strengthen a sense of wonder about our world.

- **Stephen Siemens (He/Him/His)**
Mango FX, Los Angeles County
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

Being a member of the 18th Street Arts Center community in Santa Monica, I've witnessed the the impact the arts have to connect this local community to the international stage. I've met talented visiting artists from Denmark, Germany, Spain, London, Mexico, and a host of other countries, and the 18th Street community continues to foster deep connections across borders. Budget cuts will not only adversely affect the lives of local artists, but also California's artistic relevance and growth internationally.

- **Christian Arana (He/Him/His)**
Latino Community Foundation
- **Current or Former Grantee: California Creative Corps**
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

On behalf of the Latino Community Foundation (LCF), the nation's largest Latino-serving foundation, I respectfully submit this comment on Governor Newsom's May Revise proposal.

In 2021, Governor Newsom passed California Creative Corps, a \$60 million initiative that sought to leverage arts and culture to increase public awareness on the COVID-19 pandemic, civic engagement, and more. LCF was one of 14 organizations chosen by CAC to administer these funds. With these resources, we launched an initiative called PoderArte, which meshes the words art and power into one.

LCF funded 28 nonprofit organizations across the state to catalyze civic engagement and directly invested in the creative economy. At least 60% of the funds went directly to artists' salaries, crucial in sustaining artists and their families.

It is therefore concerning to hear that the Newsom Administration is considering cutting the CAC budget. We have seen firsthand how important arts and culture is to our community and its ability to motivate engagement. From Los Angeles to the Central Valley, it is offering people outlets to expression and civic participation.

Governor Newsom in his 2021 annual state of the state offered the following: “We don’t wait for someone else to show us the way forward. We go first, and we go boldly.” We hope he continues to live up to these words, and make California the leader in arts funding. Anything less damages our reputation as a model state for the nation.

- **Joyce Keil ()**
Ragazzi Boys Chorus
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council’s Local Assistance

As an educator of boys in music I strongly support funding for the arts. Currently too often only families with money for a private musical experience have that opportunity. Ragazzi has over 200 boys and they are there because they want to sing. And this is something that boys need to help develop their sense of community, their sense of obligation to society and their emotional intelligence. Many of these boys do not excel academically or in sports and the Arts are the one place where they feel good about themselves. I’ve been told by my students that forgot to have saved their lives. In addition music uses all parts of the brain and helps develop skills in literature and Mathematics and builds the ability to concentrate and fulfill a task that requires long-term concentration and tenacity. Please support increasing or maintaining funding for the Arts in California.

- **Patricia Frischer (She/Her/Hers)**
San Diego Visual Arts Network, San Diego County
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council’s Local Assistance, 5.
DISCUSSION: May Revise Proposal - Move the California Arts Council within the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development

We are shouting as loud as we possibly can as it is so short sighted to cut the budget from a sector that is suffering more than others from COVID while it continues to be a huge part of the economy of the State. It is time to acknowledge that the arts are more than wonderful as food for the soul...they put food on the table. If putting the Arts Council in the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development will once and

for all solve this pathetic support for the arts, we say yes! New York gives \$200 million a year for the arts. California's pathetic arts budget is a joke. Correct this now unless you want more artists to become homeless and add to your other problems. Shame on the Governor for making this cut. How can we vote for you again?

- **Deborah Brockus (She/Her/Hers)**
Brockus Project Dance, Los Angeles County
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

Arts funding is critical for the health and progress on California. We provide jobs, support youth development into happy productive citizens, help communities thrive. Cutting funding to the arts is short sighted due to the wide impact the arts have, every dollar spent multiples in its effect.

- **Caroline Bamforth (She/Her/Hers)**
Sacramento Master Singers, Sacramento County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief, Organizational Development, Professional Development
RE: Agenda Item 7. VOTING ITEM: Program Policy Committee Recommendations for Revision of Program Guidelines

I am writing on behalf of the Sacramento Master Singers, to express my disappointment that we are not eligible to apply for the General Operating Support grant this year. Our revenue is around \$120k a year and we rely on grants for general operating to help us sustain our operations. Excluding organizations that have small budgets can be detrimental, as many of us have limited staff and we rely on those funds to help build capacity and also to fund community outreach programs and partnerships. The CAC states that it is prioritizing small organizations, but is excluding the smallest of organizations that are in need of the support.

- **Janine Mapurunga (She/Her/Hers)**
Self employed artist, Sacramento County
Current or Former Grantee: California Creative Corps
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

Please stop cutting arts funding! Arts and creative expression are fundamental characteristics of being human. We are fundamentally creative. Ever since the beginning of humankind, humans have been creating and expressing ourselves through art. Research across many fields shows that when art is present in a community, the wellbeing and health of that community is exponentially improved. Taking away arts is detrimental to the wellbeing of a society. Given the sick state of our society already, removing arts will have a negative effect on society as a whole. We need to be adding more arts, not taking the existing programs away. Add arts programming into any situation, be it in schools, jails, community centers, at the home, in hospitals, and you will see the positive effects that result. Please do not take away the funding that is already in place and instead understand that we need more funding, more arts and creativity support in our society. In order for a society to thrive, we need creative expression. It's an essential need of humans to be able to thrive, treat each other well and excel in creating a better environment for all of us.

- **Mark (He/Him/His)**
Golden Ghosts, Siskiyou County
Current or Former Grantee: California Creative Corps, Impact Projects
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget
Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

I live in a very real county and I've been producing art and films for over 20 years here in far northern California. There isn't the funders that are associated with urban areas in the rest of the state, but there are very talented people living in rural California, the California arts council is one of the only funders that brings money for the arts to our area Through impact grants and the creative core. I've been able to hire many different artists and actors throughout my region and I have exposed our programs and programming to maybe one to 2000 people in our area California needs to rethink how the arts embellish the communities and gives opportunities to people who would not have them otherwise . Please reconsider your funding, cuts and actually increase them. We could use more funding. We could use more art creates a healthy society.

- **Michael (He/Him/His)**
Sacramento County
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget
Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

Art is important to our culture and the economy. Democratic arts funding is crucial so arts are not limited to that favored by and created for wealth, but all art for the greater part of society. In the words of JFK:

“As a great democratic society, we have a special responsibility to the arts. For art is the great democrat, calling forth creative genius from every sector of society, disregarding race or religion or wealth or color. What freedom alone can bring is the liberation of the human mind and a spirit which finds its greatest flowering in the free society. I see of little more importance to the future of our country and our civilization than the full recognition of the place of the artist.”

- **Charles Duncombe (He/Him/His)**
Aresis Ensemble (City Garage Theatre), Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council’s Local Assistance, 5.
DISCUSSION: May Revise Proposal - Move the California Arts Council within the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development

Please do not reduce funding to the CAC. Nonprofits small and large across the state depend on this funding and the arts have been demonstrated over and over to be strong revenue multipliers, both for local communities and the state’s tax revenues. Our particular organization was only able to survive the pandemic shut down due to CAC funding (as well as other state programs). We are all still fighting our way back. This is the last time to reduce funding. Also, I urge you in the strongest possible terms to preserve the CAC as an independent agency, Rolling it into a commercially-oriented, pro-business, for-profit management entity would be disastrous. Only knowledgeable professionals with deep experience of the nonprofit world are qualified to administer these programs--as the horrific experiences with Lendistry, as an administrator of state funding to nonprofits, abundantly proved.

- **Allison Cagley (She/Her/Hers)**
Friends of Sacramento Arts, Sacramento County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council’s Local Assistance

The California Arts Council plays a critical role in building and sustaining a thriving creative economy in our state. Artists and arts organizations of all sizes in the largest and most diverse state in the country rely on funding from CAC to survive and grow. According to the recent AEP6, the economic impact of the arts exceeds many other sectors. Continued funding of CAC is imperative to not only the economic health of our state but the social-emotional health of every resident. Creative expression and appreciation of the arts makes for healthy society. We cannot back down from putting the arts front and center in our priorities for a vibrant, thriving state.

- **Mike Blockstein**
Public Matters, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: California Creative Corps
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council’s Local Assistance, 7. VOTING ITEM: Program Policy Committee Recommendations for Revision of Program Guidelines

I am a current CA Creative Corps Fellow. I’ve also run arts organizations. I am writing to voice my and Public Matters strong opposition to the proposed \$10M funding cuts. California is a leader in the arts. It’s what the state is known for. When you ask people what they value about California cities and communities, the answers invariably refer to arts and culture. When you ask people how they got through the pandemic, the answers invariably go back to music, film, performance, and art. Cuts to the arts send the wrong message at the wrong time. In times of constant uncertainty, of divisiveness, of distrust, we all need a vital and thriving arts and cultural landscape in our state and our nation. The arts connect us to our humanity. They bring people together across divisions. They heal. They inform. They touch us and touch on our shared values. The impact of these cuts will be devastating.

- **DARCI FRANK (She/Her/Hers)**
Arts Council of Placer County, Placer County
Current or Former Grantee: State-Local Partnership
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council’s Local Assistance

Change the way you think about the arts. Funding to the California Arts Council will yield a GREAT RETURN ON INVESTMENT. Arts funding will generate more tax revenue, while also supporting healthier communities. Can an investment in other sectors tout that?

In 2022, in Placer County the non-profit arts and culture sector had a \$26.1 million economic impact. That economic activity supported 436 jobs, provided \$15.3 million in personal income to residents, and generated \$4.8 million in tax revenue to local, state, and federal governments. The arts have a huge economic impact in California and are big businesses.

Additionally, arts are crucial for California's ability to innovate, and DRIVE FUTURE INGENUITY. As we learned from Randy Cohen, VP of Research at Americans for the Arts, in order for people to think creatively, they must have opportunities to be engaged in arts.

Finally, arts build the economy, strengthens the visitor economy, and provides shared experiences with people of different races, ethnicities, and beliefs creating better understanding.

Make a sound investment with our State's resources by investing in the arts!

- **Stacy Sullivan (She/Her/Hers)**
Foundation for the Performing Arts Center, San Luis Obispo County
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget
Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

California should continue to be a leader, not one of the last place states. Per capita arts funding as proposed would put us at 45th in the nation. That's unacceptable. Removing \$10m in grant funding will directly impact San Luis Obispo county and our diverse community's access to the arts. This will impact programs that bring students from Santa Maria and Paso Robles and everywhere in between to live performances at our theater. It will impact our ability to host subsidized local arts performers in our theater. As a board member for the Foundation for the Performing Arts, I oppose the cuts and urge California government to reconsider. After all, our state's arts economy represents more than 1/4 of the creative economy of the entire country. We should lead in the arts segment, not lag behind 44 states. The CAC's budget should not be reduced from \$26 million to \$16 million. Thank you CA Arts Council for all you do to provide humanity through the arts to the many residents of California.

- **Anonymous (She/Her/Hers)**

Tuolumne County

**Current or Former Grantee: California Creative Corps, State-Local Partnership
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance**

I admit to being in profound shock knowing that proposed funding cuts would be so draconian. Yet again, there is no certainty that this small, rural agency will survive this decision.

The last five years has been very difficult. An internal crash of the organization was devastating, and occurred right before the challenges of the pandemic, implementation of AB5, as well as the death of our bookkeeper due to covid. Contention over social equity issues at the city and county level spilled into our work and put us in the center of the controversy.

We received a lifeline with the Creative Corps. Our organization has finally begun to make some progress in all of the areas in which the CAC wants to see in our state.

The Creative Corps pilot project, which is just wrapping up, has been a game changer for our county. Many goals of the CAC were more than met in our region. Under-served communities were uplifted. Artists were employed as working artists, many for the first time. The amount of support we received from our Administrating Organization, United Way Merced allowed for the type of successes that we had, as our overall capacity is not up to the task because of the amount of support that was needed. Our organization was even able to hire part time staff, as the time and energy it takes to serve this community is unsustainable with only one person.

It is depressing that these deep cuts will be coming right after so much progress.

- **Sarah Weber (She/Her/Hers)**
Association of California Symphony Orchestras, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Statewide and Regional Networks
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

On behalf of the Assoc of CA Symphony Orchestras (ACSO) and 100s of orchestras and music orgs we represent, I express our deep concern over the proposed arts funding cuts in the 2024-2025 budget. We urge Governor Newsom and the Legislature to reject these cuts, which would have devastating impacts on our sector.

The proposed \$10 million reduction to the California Arts Council (CAC) and elimination of the \$12.5 million Performing Arts Equitable Payroll Fund represent a 58% cut to funding for local arts programs. This would disproportionately impact small performing arts organizations, making them even more vulnerable as they continue to recover from the pandemic and face rising operational costs.

Currently, the CAC is underfunded, with 54% of applicants denied grants in 2023. A further \$10 million cut would rank California 45th in the nation in arts funding, a stark contrast to our state's reputation for creative excellence and our industry's contribution of 8% to California's economy, generating over \$290 billion in direct impact, supporting 847,688 jobs, and contributing 7.3% of state tax revenues.

ACSO relies on a CAC Statewide Regional Network grant to fund programs and services for orchestras. Few funders, public or private, support the work of arts service organizations. Losing CAC funding would devastate not only us but the entire statewide creative ecosystem. Arts service organizations provide essential support, ensuring that arts orgs and artists can thrive.

- **Anonymous**
San José Arts Advocates, Santa Clara County
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance, 7. VOTING ITEM: Program Policy Committee Recommendations for Revision of Program Guidelines

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the drastic cuts to arts funding proposed by the Governor in the May budget revision. The \$10M cut to the California Arts Council's budget reduces its already meager \$26M budget by 38%. And sweeping back \$12.5M to launch the Equitable Payroll Fund is a huge blow to a five-year bi-partisan effort to stabilize the live arts workforce. In total, these cuts represent a disproportionate 58.4% reduction in arts funding intended to reach and serve California communities.

Arts, culture, and creative expression are core services that heal and empower individuals, engage youth, weave the social fabric of our communities, and make our neighborhoods vibrant while driving over 8% of the state's economy, supporting 847,688 jobs, and generating 7.3% of state tax revenue. Meanwhile, at \$26M a year, the CAC ranks 36th in the nation in per capita state arts funding. A \$10M cut to the CAC budget would position California at 45th in the nation in local arts assistance funding, just above Kentucky, Kansas, and Georgia.

We hope you recognize the drastic nature of these cuts and the destabilizing threats they pose to the livelihoods of the creative workforce, particularly the most vulnerable of arts organizations and arts workers including those located in rural communities and communities of color.

We call upon the Governor and Legislature to restore funding for the California Arts Council and the Equitable Payroll Fund.

- **Zoey Zimmerman (She/Her/Hers)**

Los Angeles County

RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

The \$10 million cut to the California Arts Council's budget reduces its already meager \$26 million budget by 38%. This will undoubtedly effect programs that are already underfunded. Arts are crucial to state and we should be INCREASING this budget; slashing it like this is short sighted and unconscionable. Governor Newsom's priorities are misguided and I will never vote for him or ANY legislator who supports this cut.

- **Anonymous**

San Francisco County

Current or Former Grantee: Not a current or former grantee

RE: Agenda Item 5. DISCUSSION: May Revise Proposal - Move the California Arts Council within the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development

More opportunities need to be made available for independent artists (particularly photographic).

Also, a dangerous phenomenon (or affliction) has become increasingly prevalent in your approach to recognizing artists: conflating art with moral instruction and vice versa.

- **Peter Allen (He/Him/His)**
Teatro Visión, Santa Clara County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief, Arts Education Exposure, California Relief Fund for Artists and Cultural Practitioners, Creative Youth Development (formerly

**Youth Arts Action), Local Impact
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget
Reductions to the California Arts Council’s Local Assistance, 7. VOTING
ITEM: Program Policy Committee Recommendations for Revision of
Program Guidelines**

I am writing to express my opposition to the drastic cuts to arts funding proposed by the Governor in the May budget revision. The \$10M cut to the California Arts Council reduces its already meager \$26M budget by 38%. And sweeping back \$12.5M for the Equitable Payroll Fund is a huge blow to a five-year bi-partisan effort to stabilize the arts workforce. In total, these cuts represent a disproportionate 58.4% reduction in arts funding.

As a longtime board member of a nonprofit performing arts organization, I know that arts, culture, and creative expression heal and empower individuals, engage youth, weave the social fabric of our communities, and make our neighborhoods vibrant while driving over 8% of the state’s economy, supporting 847,688 jobs, and generating 7.3% of state tax revenue.

A \$10M cut to the CAC budget would put California 45th in the nation in local arts funding. Closing General Operating Grants for 2024 could severely limit my organization’s ability to deliver high quality artistic experiences to our low-income, BIPOC community. And while some parts of the economy have recovered from the impacts of COVID, nonprofit performing arts — which also face rising labor and operational costs — have not. Eliminating the Equitable Payroll Fund would prevent us from creating jobs and circulating more capital in historically underserved neighborhoods.

I call upon the Governor and Legislature to restore funding for the CAC and the Equitable Payroll Fund.

- **Carrie (She/Her/Hers)**

Riverside County

RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council’s Local Assistance

The California Arts Council serves a vital purpose in education and well being of all of the citizens of California. It supports so many communities’ arts and culture programs which raises awareness and importance of arts outreach. All people are elevated and

enriched by the arts programming in their lives. Please maintain these programs by keeping the budgeted funds in tact.

- **Kevin Eberle-Noel (He/Him/His)**
Redlands Symphony Association, San Bernardino County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts Education Exposure, Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action), Local Impact
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

For smaller budget organizations, like the Redlands Symphony, funding from the California Arts Council is crucial. Without these funds, many of our educational and artistic programs would be impacted. The drastic 58% cuts to the arts and culture budget proposed in the May 2024 budget revision put small budget organizations, and in particular small budget organizations in San Bernardino County, at risk of losing programs and not being able to provide vital arts and culture services. Unlike neighboring counties, there are fewer corporate and foundational giving institutions that could pick up the difference of reduced CAC funding. This is not the case in San Bernardino County. I urge the Governor's office to restore funding in the next budget revision. According to the National Association of State Arts Agencies, in FY23, California had a 54.7% reduction to arts appropriations. Only two other states, North Carolina and Wyoming, had reductions. Californians are innovative, creative people who deserve a thriving and supportive arts economy and cultural climate.

- **Kim (She/Her/Hers)**
Liberty Arts,
Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief, Arts Education Exposure, Impact Projects, Local Impact
RE: Agenda Item 7. VOTING ITEM: Program Policy Committee Recommendations for Revision of Program Guidelines

Greetings from Liberty Arts in rural Siskiyou County. We are encouraged to hear that the Council will be revisiting the decision to exclude art organizations with operating budgets under 250K from applying for the General Operations grant. We work with a very tight budget to share the arts throughout this vast and rural county, which is in the bottom third of the HPI. We interact with many whose small towns are excluded from

HPI rating because their population is under 1,500. It is IMPORTANT to keep these opportunities funded.

Thank you for your consideration, Kim Presley

- **Anonymous**
Current or Former Grantee: Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action)

Please explain the Council's decision to exclude organizations with budgets over \$1.5 million from access to general operating or programmatic support outside of education initiatives. These are some of the state's most promising and established organizations - why wouldn't the CAC support them?

- **Anonymous**

As we understand the concern over cuts being made by the governor, we would ask that you please reconsider opening grants back up to small organizations under \$250,000—especially the operating grants. Smaller organizations have been the hardest hit during and after Covid times. We received one once and it was a major turning point for us. But now that we've been cut out again, we are close to closing. Please reconsider smaller organizations in your decisions today. Thank you.

- **Susie Tanner (She/Her/Hers)**
TheatreWorkers Project, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief, Arts Education Exposure, Arts in Corrections, Arts Integration Training, JUMP StArts, Impact Projects, Reentry Through the Arts, Artists in Communities

We appreciate past & current funding and the hard work program staff does. We are especially appreciative of the efforts and support by Jonathan Estrada and Josy Miller who has been an amazing CAC staff member for so many years. We are extremely frustrated by the fact that our AIC contract invoice AIC-19- 107-A3 PO #10316 for July 2023 has not been paid. We are a small organization. \$7,012.30 of missing income is problematic for us. I have been asked by numerous staff, including Accounting, to be "patient". The last concrete response I received was this:

On Fri, Mar 8, 2024 at 8:38 AM:

Hello Susie

I am working on getting this invoice processed. Thank you for your patience.

Thank you

I'm appealing to Council to assist us in resolving this matter.

Thank you

- **Richard Stein (He/Him/His)**
Arts Orange County, Orange County
Current or Former Grantee: State-Local Partnership
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget
Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

Dear Council Members, we at Arts Orange County are your State-Local Partner located on the lands of our community's first artists, the Acjachemen Nation-Juaneno Band of Mission Indians, who have representation on our Board of Directors, which mirrors almost exactly the diverse demographics of Orange County.

In light of the Governor's draconian cuts to arts funding for 2024, I wish to inform you of the active role we are playing in opposing these cuts through vigorous advocacy to our large delegation of legislators. Since the May Revise was announced, we have met with several legislators or their staffs, and I'm pleased to report that we have secured the signatures so far of Senators Bob Archuleta and Tom Umberg, and Assemblymembers Sharon Quirk-Silva and Anthony Rendon for opposition letters originating with Senator Anthony Portantino and Assemblymember Mike Gipson. We have also informed 8,000 subscribers to our newsletter and urged them to communicate their opposition to the arts funding cuts using the tool provided to us by California for the Arts, have met with and reached out to key arts leaders countywide to do likewise, which they are doing.

Sharing this with you is not only for the purpose of updating you on our own specific activities, but as an example of the vital role that State-Local Partners play as advocates for the California Arts Council in almost every county. It is vital that funding of State-Local Partners continue to be a top priority for CAC. Thank you!

- **Alexandra Urbanowski (She/Her/Hers)**
SVCreatives, Santa Clara County
Current or Former Grantee: State-Local Partnership, Administrating

Organization for CAC IAF

RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council’s Local Assistance

As you consider the impact of potential state budget cuts on CAC programs I urge you to consider the vital role the SLPs play in ensure a foundation for the arts across the entire state and the importance of full funding for the SLP program during this challenging budget climate.

As the state local partner or SLP with the CAC for Santa Clara County, SVCcreates we serve a diverse portfolio of over 85 small arts organizations and hundreds of individual artists in our county, which stretches from techy Palo Alto, through urban San Jose which is home to the largest Vietnamese population in the United States, all the way to the agricultural majority Latinx community of Gilroy.

SVCcreates and the approximately 50 other SLPS through out the state are the foundational web that ensures that state support gets to all corners of the state; in challenging times, like the budget situation we face now – we can help the wide range of artists and arts groups navigate the landscape; in flush times we help you get new resources out equitably. And in many counties, especially rural ones, SLPs are the primary or main providers of arts programming.

We stand ready to continue our partnership and support as state local partners with CAC as we advocate and navigate challenges together. Thank you for your service to our state.

- **Christopher Maikish (He/Him/His)**
Celebration Theatre, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief, Impact Projects
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council’s Local Assistance

My name is Christopher Maikish, Executive Director of CAC grantee, Celebration Theatre in Los Angeles, one of the longest-running LGBTQ+ arts nonprofits in the country (and world). We have served this marginalized community for 42 years but the lingering impacts of pandemic shutdowns, AB5 law, inflation, and historic state underfunding of the Arts are threatening to close our doors. This is at a time when LGBTQ+ people are experiencing a devastating surge in hateful rhetoric and violence, particularly against transgender people.

Our mission, like others, contributes significantly to our neighborhoods: jobs, social well-being, cultural impact. We understand there are serious financial decisions the State is facing; these cuts in the Arts, however, are grossly disproportionate and should be scaled back.

We already feel the impact: the recent news of these planned cuts tipped the scales for our Board who made the painful decision to lay off part-time staff, leaving us with a skeleton crew. Cutting arts funding to this degree will shrink programs that create jobs and social connection, harming underserved communities further. The State is stewarding a recipe for the closure of many more arts organizations. It is foolish and leaders must consider restoring funds if they hope to stave off a further, steep contraction of our vital, underappreciated sector. California should be leading the arts economy nationally, not slipping to 45th place.

Thank you for your time.

- **Beatrice Casagran (They/Them/Theirs)**
Ophelia's Jump Productions, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief, California Relief Fund for Artists and Cultural Practitioners, Impact Projects
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance;
7. VOTING ITEM: Program Policy Committee Recommendations for Revision of Program Guidelines

Ophelia's Jump Productions ("OJP") is a nonprofit, Latina founded & run org employing 50-80 workers yearly. We have 6 part-time staff- all women, Queer, and/or Latinx. We train young artists. Since 2013 we've served communities through production, education, volunteering, and our Theatre for Good Program (previously funded by CAC). Since 2019, OJP has seen a 300% increase in operating costs due to the effects of AB5, rising wages, and inflation. We've gone from revenues of \$183k in 2019 to over \$550k in 2023, but we are in a financially more precarious position than ever. We are 1 or 2 months away from exhausting our funds just to pay payroll. Increased funding during the pandemic helped us meet the rise in costs, but that funding is now gone AND the CAC's outdated focus on organizations with revenues less than \$250k meant we did not get a much needed operating grant last round. 2024 revenue will fall far short of meeting costs. We are doing all we can to increase earned revenue while still keeping our programs accessible to all. But while in 2019 we were able to cover 40-60% of costs from earned revenue, that number is now 20-25%. We will not survive if funding is further cut or if the CAC does not update its criteria to reflect the new reality of what it takes to be a viable, small nonprofit theatre producing a full season and hiring all

workers as employees. We need public funding & we need funding criteria that reflect the shift in the economic landscape post pandemic.

- **Beverly Jordan**
Sierra County Arts Council, Sierra County
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Schools, Arts Education Exposure, Impact Projects, State-Local Partnership

The Sierra County Arts Council would like to thank the California Arts Council for its continued support of the State-Local Partnership and other grant programs that help us to bring cultural programming to our isolated rural frontier communities. Without the operational funding from the State-Local Partnership program we would have to close our doors. The impact on our rural communities and our access to funding resources for the arts would be devastated without the SLP program. We hope you will continue to support our mission to bring together community and art in Sierra County. Thank you again for all your support over the years.

- **Roy Dietrich**
Riverside Community Arts Association, Riverside County
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Communities, Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief, Arts and Accessibility, Arts and Public Media, Arts Education Exposure, Creative California Communities, Innovations + Intersections, Local Impact, Organizational Development, Community Arts contribution
RE: Agenda Item 4. Opening Remarks and Community Agreements, 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposed Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's General Fund – Operations

Please read, re-read, and understand the numerous surveys on the substantial positive economic impact the arts have provided back to it's communities. It is reverse thinking. It is non-logical making the proposed cuts to the state of the arts here and anywhere in this country. I thought the idea is to grow our economy, not take away from it. If cuts are necessary, it should not first start with the funding for the arts!

- **Jennifer Kane (She/Her/Hers)**
Advisory Committee for C5 Community Arts Center, Inyo County

**Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General
Operating Relief, California Creative Corps
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget
Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance**

I work with two of the Five (and there are only 5) arts organizations in Inyo and Mono Counties that receive local assistance. This is an extremely rural and challenging region in California with very little other public funding to support operations for these small nonprofits. I see first hand the incredible work that they do on the ground everyday and in every single school. They provide work for local artists like myself, they beautify and uplift the communities and provide diverse and rich programming that connects and benefits thousands of locals. If these funding cuts go through, it would be devastating for these counties and for the youth and artists they serve.

- **Amanda Sanchez (She/Her/Hers)**
Capitol Creative Alliance, Sacramento County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General
Operating Relief, Statewide and Regional Networks
RE: Agenda Item 7. VOTING ITEM: Program Policy Committee
Recommendations for Revision of Program Guidelines

I am the Co-Director of Capitol Creative Alliance, a small arts nonprofit that serves creative professionals in the Sacramento region. We rely on grants from the California Arts Council to fund our programs, and our staff. I have been attending the legislative hearings at the Capitol, and I understand that we are all doing our best to make lemonade out of the lemons we have been handed.

As you are considering how to handle the looming budget cuts, I ask you to please think about the staff and the workforce that will be impacted by these cuts. Smaller organizations like ours may not be able to exist without the funding from California Arts Council. We knew going into the General Operating Support grant that our 2025 payment would be based on the budget, and so we are doing our part to oppose the cuts to advocate for the arts.

My ask for you is to be transparent and clear about how our grants will be impacted in 2025, and to work with us on solutions for ways to fill the gaps as we continue to build California's creative future on scrappy budgets.

Thank you.

- **Victor Payan (He/Him/His)**
Media Arts Santa Ana (MASA), Orange County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief, California Creative Corps, Cultural Pathways, Impact Projects, Individual Artists Fellowships, Local Impact, Organizational Development, Professional Development
RE: Agenda Item 5. DISCUSSION: May Revise Proposal - Move the California Arts Council within the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development

I am writing to urge you to oppose the proposed 58% cut to California's arts budget and moving the CAC under GO Biz. This draconian reduction would devastate artists and arts organizations serving large and small communities throughout California. The proposed cuts in arts funding would have an immediate devastating effect in undercutting the California arts sector's capacity to invest in communities, employ Californians, provide access to critical programs and services, and deliver professional development opportunities to youth. This is especially true for low-income communities and communities of color who have historically lacked access to civic investment.

Artists and arts organizations significantly increase quality of life by:

- Building liveable communities
- and Driving local spending and economic development
- Improving personal well-being
- Building empathy and understanding
- Sparking creativity innovation
- Strengthening the visitor economy
- Generating \$29.1 billion in tax revenue

Artists and arts organizations played an invaluable role in serving communities and keeping us connected during the pandemic.

Public arts spending fuels a powerful economic engine that benefits Californians and communities across the state. Let us not abandon California's artists who provide valuable critical services to Californians by helping drive the economy, tourism, safer communities, youth opportunities, quality of life and future innovation!

- **Christopher Winston (He/Him/His)**
C-Squared Productions, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: California Creative Corps
RE: Agenda Item 5. DISCUSSION: May Revise Proposal - Move the California Arts Council within the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development

In regards to disproportionate funding cuts I think this needs to be reevaluated because arts programming is vital in our communities and decreasing funds it will not allow community programs to function properly.

- **Perviz Randeria (She/Her/Hers)**
San Francisco County
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

It's essential that you continue funding artists and arts organizations because we all know the power of arts and the arts economy is vital to the Bay Area identity and survival.

- **Joshua Lamont (He/Him/His)**
Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Communities, Artists in Schools, Arts Education Exposure, Arts in Corrections, California Relief Fund for Artists and Cultural Practitioners, JUMP StArts, Individual Artists Fellowships, Reentry Through the Arts
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

Insanity: extreme folly or unreasonableness. We have seen this situation before. It happened in the 70s. Then, in the 90s. And now again. Massive cuts to the state budget because of rising demands. These cuts become easiest to make to the Arts because they are seen as non-essential. Non-threatening. The easiest to justify. Time and time again, we see the ramifications of this thinking. Poor student enrollment and attendance which leads to a higher dropout rate. Less opportunities for creative outlets leading to less jobs and higher crime rates. All this compounds to the poor public and mental health of our communities.

Today, the Arts and CAC are being threatened again. Have we learned nothing? In 4 years, the Olympics will bring the world to California. But, what California will the world see? If these threats persist, the world will see a state that is skin deep. Beautiful on the outside, but hollow and shallow on the inside. Is this shallowness the message we want to send? Or rather, isn't that what the world already thinks? We have no culture. We have no true art. We could never rival New York, London, Johannesburg, or Paris. It seems like we want to be a self-fulfilling prophesy.

While it seems like tough decisions need to be made, what's really needed is innovative thinking on the state's part. Legislators need to get creative.

It's a pity they don't know where to look.

- **Susan L Petrella (She/Her/Hers)**
Susan Petrella, Orange County
RE: Agenda Item 5. DISCUSSION: May Revise Proposal - Move the California Arts Council within the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development

As a Consultant, SoCal's startup/innovation/entrepreneurship ecosystem, arts/culture advocate/patron/contracts: Creative Orange County, ArtsForLA, WESTAF, Bounce: new Arts Podcast etc., member: various SoCal arts organizations, I do not support the relocation of the CA Arts Council to Go-Biz. However, as the speakers said, the arts do have an economic impact (led American for the Arts Economic Impact Study 4 for Fullerton CA), I advocate an MOA w/Go-Biz regarding possible additional funding sources, strategic partnerships etc. so to continue to advance CA Arts Council's mission/vision.

- **Morgan Mandalay (He/Him/His)**
California Lawyers for the Arts
Current or Former Grantee: Statewide and Regional Networks
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance

On behalf of California Lawyers of the Arts (CLA) I urge the members of the California Arts Council (CAC) to continue to push back on the proposed 37% budget cut from the State government. I would be preaching to the choir to inform you of just how important the funding from the CAC is to our organization and countless others across the state.

Specifically I want to share with you the impact your funding has had on formerly incarcerated Californians through our arts-focused reentry program, Designing Creative Futures.

Designing Creative Futures is a program specifically established to build on the success of the CAC's Arts in Corrections programming. Since January of 2022 we have worked with over 140 of our returning neighbors to develop job skills in a wide range of fields within the arts, from theater carpentry & grant management to marketing & museum education, through paid part time internships.

Thanks to funding from the State, we have been able to provide unique internship opportunities at nearly 60 arts organizations from San Diego to the Bay Area who provide skills training, mentorship, and facilitate expanded opportunities to develop prosocial relationships to help our returning neighbors have a successful reintegration into the workforce.

We believe in the arts as a means of creating safer, more productive, empathetic and caring communities, and implore the Council Members to continue to fight for State funding for arts programs.

- **Maeva (My-ĒĒĒ-vuh) (She/Her/Hers)**
Artistically Elevated Design, Los Angeles County
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance,
7. VOTING ITEM: Program Policy Committee Recommendations for Revision of Program Guidelines

[1/3]

Hi!

I appreciate you putting the pieces together. I'll be submitting a separate comment about Go-Biz.

Here is the transcript of my verbal public comment regarding proposed cuts to the CAC budget:

"If you are silent about your pain, they'll kill you and say you enjoyed it." - Zora Neale Hurston

Our sector has received feedback from legislators who have said that we aren't loud enough about what we need to thrive. However, I want to acknowledge that sometimes people aren't silent about their pain but are actually very vocal; in cases like that, it is

the lack of access to the ears of those that have the power and the strength of character to change things for the better through their actions.

With that being said, hi everyone!

My name is Maeva (My-EEE-vuh). I'm an interdisciplinary conceptual artist, a certified human rights consultant and the owner of Artistically Elevated Design, which is both an art studio and a social design studio.

- **Maeva (My-ĒĒĒ-vuh) (She/Her/Hers)**
Artistically Elevated Design, Los Angeles County
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance, 7. VOTING ITEM: Program Policy Committee Recommendations for Revision of Program Guidelines

[2/3]

It is human right #27 that states that we have the right to access the arts and to enjoy the arts. Reducing funding violates this right as it would restrict access to the arts as was just demonstrated by the Program Policy committee's recommendations. Public arts funding should actually be increased to support human flourishing. If the healthy character development of humankind and the forward momentum of our society is a priority, the Governor should reconsider divesting in the arts because our work sector is an essential element in solving the puzzles that unlock the potential of our society. Artists are the State's second responders so let's not fire the doctor after the doctor has healed us.

There's a difference between taking \$1 from someone that has \$10 and taking \$1 from someone who has \$100,000. The impact is more severe in the former scenario...and The Arts and Culture sector is the former in this example. Impact outweighs Intention every time...as it should.

- **Maeva (My-ĒĒĒ-vuh) (She/Her/Hers)**
Artistically Elevated Design, Los Angeles County
RE: Agenda Item 6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposal- Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council's Local Assistance, 7. VOTING ITEM: Program Policy Committee Recommendations for Revision of Program Guidelines

[3/3]

As arts advocacy is a part of my creative practice, I began thinking about these proposed cuts from different perspectives and something interesting came to mind. The people of CA support the arts and want it uplifted within their communities, which was demonstrated by the passing of Prop 28. Is our government and its State agencies bound by “the supplement, not supplant clause” of Prop 28 when considering their budget allocations for the arts?

I ask this because these cuts would come on the heels of a major investment in our sector and looks eerily similar to school districts violating “the supplement, not supplant clause” of Prop 28. We are hoping that the impetus for the proposed cuts isn’t from the subconscious knowing that there is increased investment in the arts in CA schools because then the Governor would be using the availability of Prop 28 funding to supplant other potential state arts funding. This would break the State’s own stipulation and would set a terrible precedent for the State’s regions to follow.

Again...

“If you are silent about your pain, they’ll kill you and say you enjoyed it.” - Zora Neale Hurston

Thank you.

- **Meghan Joy O’Keefe (They/Them/Theirs)**
Amador County Arts Council, Amador County
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Schools, Arts Education Exposure, Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action), JUMP StArts, Impact Projects, Local Impact, Organizational Development, State-Local Partnership
RE: Agenda Item 3. Land and Peoples Acknowledgment,
6. PRESENTATION: May Revise Proposed Budget Reductions to the California Arts Council’s General Fund – Operations,
5. DISCUSSION: May Revise Proposal - Move the California Arts Council within the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development

Acknowledging the appreciation for Land Acknowledgment Practice. This work “trickles down” the State Local Partner Grant (SLP) . Thank you for SLP, which advances Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Access, especially in rural spaces where these lenses would otherwise not be part of local culture.

We oppose reduction in CAC budget as proposed in May revision of 2024-25 budget. Reducing funding, especially to rural communities, will immediately impact the ability to develop future creative workforce that drives economic dynamism and scaffolds health

and vibrance. The SLP has provided 4 generations of artists in Amador with support, information, and professional development as they enter the creative workforce, college, and arts business. Thanks to CAC and SLP, our staff moved “out of the closet” and pivoted the exclusive culture into one that is of/by/for all.—IT WORKS!

We oppose the move to the Office of Business and Economic Development. While arts, culture, and creativity stimulate economic growth, they do more: bringing people together across differences, supporting physiological balance within individual and collective ecosystems, and sustaining our most ancient tradition across all human sects: expression. Arts, Culture, and Creativity cannot be boiled down to economics. Putting the CAC in this office would exploit a symptom of artistic process without providing nutrition (funding and office of CAC) to sustain the lives of creative practitioners.

- **Maeva (My-ĒĒĒ-vuh) (She/Her/Hers)**
Artistically Elevated Design, Los Angeles County
RE: Agenda Item 5. DISCUSSION: May Revise Proposal - Move the California Arts Council within the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development

[1/2]

Here are my thoughts on GO-Biz:

As for moving the CAC to GO-Biz, I’d need more information and data before giving an opinion; however, as an artist who owns a business and encourages other artists to become entrepreneurs, our sector would benefit from the CAC having the resources to support artist-owned small businesses in the form of grants. This funding would help the economic development of artists and our sector. It would also support the rebranding of the arts and culture sector as a thriving economic driver who comes in peace but means business.

It would be much more beneficial if there was a partnership formed between the CAC and GO-Biz that would allow the CAC to directly address some of the findings of an internal audit of their programs that was done by a third party in October 2022, if I’m not mistaken. The data reported that there was a gap of support within the way the CAC currently functioned. Artist-owned small businesses were not supported by the CAC although it is within their purview. It is essential that artists are recognized as respectable business owners if we are to be key players in economic growth and development; a partnership between the CAC and GO-Biz can make that happen.

- **Maeva (My-ĒĒĒ-vuh) (She/Her/Hers)**
Artistically Elevated Design, Los Angeles County
RE: Agenda Item 5. DISCUSSION: May Revise Proposal - Move the California Arts Council within the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development

[2/2]

I do want to acknowledge that this comment comes at a time where the Employment Development Department (EDD) raised concern within the film industry about artists' ability to use loan out companies within our state. Our right to be independent and to be respected as business owners (and to operate as such) is important and can be strengthened by a small business grant program, specifically for artist business owners. This program could be the result from a partnership between GO-Biz and an independent CAC.