

SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT CULTURAL COALITION

P.O. Box 95, New London, CT 06320 | (860) 448-5135 | info@CultureSECT.org | www.CultureSECT.org

To: Southeastern CT Council of Governments

Re: Liaison Report

For: SCCOG meeting Wednesday, June 17

From: Southeastern CT Cultural Coalition

The Cultural Coalition serves 500 + partners, including museums, performing arts centers, small and large creative businesses and individual artists/performers.

Our third, local economic survey, “*MAY Update COVID Impact Survey – Southeastern CT’s Arts & Cultural Organizations, Businesses and Artists*” closed and updated data to include lost audiences and revenue through June 30, a 16-week time period. Survey showed:

- **\$16M in estimated total financial losses** (nonprofit and for profit arts & cultural sector)
- **700K estimated lost audience members, program attendees, or customers**
- **At least 700 staff impacted** by layoffs, furlough or reduced hours through April 30
- **More than half of arts & cultural businesses could not reopen in May**
- **63% of respondents applied** to Federal, State, Local Government Relief Programs (such as CT Dept. of Labor Unemployment, Pandemic Unemployment, CARES Act PPP or EIDL, NEA, NEH, CT Office of the Arts grants, SBA Community Block grant)
- Of those who applied to government programs, the **majority (67%) anticipate that the relief received will only offset a small percentage of their total financial losses** or they do not know what level of support to expect

Operational health of organization/business (based on current situation/projections)

- 87% arts & cultural entities are currently sustaining reporting Fair (49%), Average (26%), Good (12%) operational health and 75% expecting to keep at moderate levels to September
- Uncertainty of operations grows in the 3rd and 4th quarters, with 12% not able to estimate the level of health at the end of summer and 23% not able to predict the level for the end of the calendar year
- Organizations and businesses at a strong/excellent level (2%) or at a critical level (9%-12%) remains consistent over time from now to the end of the calendar year

Recommendations for Municipalities with confederate statues or monuments

Consider having artists “reimagine” the monuments with a request for proposals:

- **Richmond, VA – Shining A Light** (<https://richmondmagazine.com/arts-entertainment/shining-a-light/>)
Lighting artist Dustin Klein covers the Lee monument with projected images of black victims of violence
- **Richmond Exhibit Seeks to Reimagine Confederate Statues**
(<https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/richmond-exhibit-seeks-to-reimagine-confederate-statues/140038/>)

Impact on Tourism Fund – Public support in CT comes from the Tourism Fund, which is derived from hotel lodging tax revenue. Below is an updated table for the estimated Tourism Fund balance based on the latest April Consensus estimates. The expenditure estimates shown here assume the FY 21 appropriations continue through the outyears. (From Senator Formica’s office)

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Tourism Fund (as of April 2020)	FY 19 Actuals	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24
Beginning Balance	-	(2,445,500)	(2,690,488)	(5,260,476)	(5,530,464)	(5,600,452)
Revenue	10,535,922	12,900,000	10,500,000	12,800,000	13,000,000	13,200,000
Expenditures	(12,981,422)	(13,144,988)	(13,069,988)	(13,069,988)	(13,069,988)	(13,069,988)
Ending Balance	(2,445,500)	(2,690,488)	(5,260,476)	(5,530,464)	(5,600,452)	(5,470,440)

With the current reopening guidelines:

- Vast majority of arts & cultural venues were **not able to open in phase 1 museums, outdoors only**
- **Phase 2 includes many arts organizations opening at reduced capacity**
- **Performing arts venues are most challenged**
- **Gig workers, including musicians unable to perform in phase 1 and very limited in phase 2**
- **Ticket refund requests continue to be major additional financial burden**
- **PPP changes are favorable**
- **Some arts & cultural organizations will be able to open in phase 2 but will not due to capacity limits, social distancing impact on revenue, costs to reopen, and/or elderly staff/volunteers**
- **Venues continue to cancel/postpone public events through summer and fall**
- **NO REVENUE for past 3 months**
- **Must maintain facility utilities** even when not in use incurring significant and ongoing costs
- **Online strategies to maintain audiences, but free programming is not sustainable**

Some good news:

- **Make Music Day 2020 on June 21** will be a unique virtual event this year with live, free accessible music and many ways to participate locally and nationally. Registration now open!
- **Cultural Coalition was asked to present at the Americans for the Arts National Convention and co-present with the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT** in a panel session "[Partnering with Chambers of Commerce on the Road to Re-Opening and Recovery](#)"

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