

CULTURAL COALITION

serving southeastern & northeastern CT

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DATE: March 24, 2022
TO: Government Administration and Elections Committee
FROM: Wendy Bury, Executive Director, Cultural Coalition
TESTIMONY: Opposition to S.B. No. 465 "An Act Concerning the Purchase and Transfer of Works of Art for State Building Projects"

Dear Co-Chairs Flexer and Fox, Vice-chairs Haskell and Thomas, Ranking Members Sampson and Mastrofrancesco and members of the Government Administration and Elections committee,

On behalf of the Cultural Coalition, a nonprofit organization that serves nearly 600 arts, cultural and creative businesses across 42 towns in eastern CT and one of eight Designated Regional Service Organizations for the CT Office of the Arts to support the Department of Economic and Community Development, I am writing to oppose SB 465 "An Act Concerning the Purchase and Transfer of Works of Art for State Building Projects." The bill would effectively eliminate the 1% for art requirement for construction, reconstruction, or remodeling of any state building.

Percent for art programs are an effective way for states and territories to foster access to the arts and increase the aesthetic value of state-owned public buildings and public places. Percent For Art was first utilized in Philadelphia in 1959. Governance and management systems vary.

Since 1959, over 350 public art programs have been established in the United States; many of these programs were established with funding generated from percent-for-art policies. "Common goals are commemoration and celebration, fostering public appreciation for art, civic dialogue, community development, enhancing the functionality or accessibility of spaces, place making, cultural tourism, and connecting artists and communities." [National Assembly of State Arts Agencies]

Today, Connecticut is one of 28 states with an active Percent for Art program. [See [Policy Brief on Percent for Art](#) programs by National Assembly of State Art Agencies for national summary and state by state details.] If this bill advances, there would be a loss of work for artists, no new commissions and a reduction in funds available for maintenance of existing artwork.

The 1% for the Arts program has supported Connecticut artists through the commissioning or purchasing of over 400 works of art in its lifetime. It has beautified more than 65 state agencies, courthouses, universities, colleges, and technical high schools across the state. It has made a quantifiable impact in our state.

I urge you to oppose SB 465. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Wendy Bury
Executive Director