

ARTS & HERITAGE DAY 2012

Today, arts advocates (administrators, board members, artists, arts educators, commissioners, volunteers and community arts leaders) from across our great state will be on campus to talk about the value of the arts and heritage in their communities and schools. For twenty-nine years, the Washington State Arts Alliance has coordinated Arts Day, a gathering of arts advocates in Olympia. Again this year, we are partnering with the Washington Museum Association to coordinate **Arts & Heritage Day**.

The work of arts and heritage organizations creates positive ripple effects throughout our communities. We're here today to help celebrate the value of arts and heritage and illuminate their effects on engagement, education, and the economy.

1. Cultural participation strengthens our communities and increases individual, civic, and social **engagement**.
2. Arts **education** helps students develop essential 21st century skills necessary to be innovators, problem-solvers, creative thinkers, and collaborators.
3. Arts and heritage are a cornerstone of a healthy **economy**, and key to tourism and economic development.

The benefits of cultural and educational investments ripple throughout a community in surprising ways. The State's small investment in the Washington State Arts Commission, the Washington State Historical Societies, and programs like Building for the Arts and Heritage Capital Projects, and the inclusion of the arts in basic education, contribute to vital communities. **We hope that the State continues to invest in these agencies and programs at least at current levels to support innovation, jobs, tourism, and economic vitality.**

[Senate Bill 6332](#) and [House Bill 2587](#) would impact the Building for the Arts program (managed by the Department of Commerce) opening eligibility for these capital budget grants to include aquariums, science centers, and zoos while also providing more funding for the program. **Please support this legislation.**

[SB 5539](#) and companion [HB 1544](#) would renew the Motion Picture Competitiveness Program managed by Washington Filmworks, the nonprofit organization designated to handle film production support and production incentives in Washington State. **Please support this legislation, which promotes Washington State, drives tourism, and provides jobs.**

[SB 6366](#) and companion [HB 2558](#) would alter Liquor Control Board policies to allow minors into movie theaters that serve beer and other alcohol as long as those theaters adopt a "minor control plan" to prevent under-age drinking. **Please support this legislation; and support expanding the definition of "theater" to include performance venues, not just motion picture venues.**

There are numerous bills relating to the Washington State Parks "Discover Pass". **Please support legislation that works to fund and sustain this incredible natural and cultural resource.**

And, several bills would negatively impact the State's public art program. **Please oppose legislation that would diminish or restrict this program, which reaps huge rewards both visually and economically throughout Washington State. Public art creates jobs and enhances community spaces.**

With education reaffirmed as the paramount duty of the state, and the arts as part of the state definition of "basic education", cuts to education severely impact the provision of arts education in our schools.

If you have any questions or want further information on how arts and heritage positively impact communities throughout Washington, please contact Mark Gerth, executive director of the Washington State Arts Alliance, at mark@wsartsalliance.com or 360-464-0749. Thanks for your time and consideration.