Dear County of San Diego Board of Supervisors,

Thank you for your ongoing support of arts and culture, specifically for re-establishing the San Diego County Arts and Culture Commission. The Commission celebrated its first anniversary in April with the completion of its first strategic plan.

However, we are disappointed that the recommended FY 2024-25 budget did not include operating funds for the San Diego County Arts and Culture Commission. The Commission needs this support to implement its strategic plan and fulfill its mission.

The County Arts and Culture Commission's work comes at a time when support for arts and culture is greatly needed. San Diego's creative industry is critical to our region's economic engine, and our economic needs are significant. According to a 2023 Americans for the Arts - Arts and Economic Prosperity study, San Diego County's nonprofit arts sector generates $1.4 billion in annual economic impact, supports nearly 20,000 jobs for residents, and contributes over $320 million in direct local taxes.

This also comes at a time when arts funding from other public sources is at risk. Although the state legislature agreed to restore 75 percent of the cuts announced by Gov. Gavin Newsom, there is still $5 million in reductions on the table for the state's local assistance arts fund. This could negatively impact the capacity of more than 100 nonprofit arts and culture organizations that depend on revenue from this fund to serve our region.

While considering the CAO's recommended budget, **we ask that you direct two (2) FTEs to establish a newly created Office of Arts and Culture, and an additional $362,000 per year to implement the San Diego Arts and Culture Commission's initiatives as described in their 2024-2026 strategic plan**. This $362,000 in fiscal year 2024-2025 will allow the office to implement activities is detailed in attachment A.

In addition to serving as an economic driver, the arts continue to provide equitable, inclusive, and accessible opportunities for learning, leisure, and community building throughout our County. It is within your power to ensure that our arts industry receives the resources needed to continue this work.

Please commit two (2) FTES and $362,000 for the San Diego County Arts and Culture Commission in the FY 2024-2025 budget.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

San Diego ARTmatters Advancing Arts & Culture Across The Region	LAMBDA ARCHIVES OF SAN DIEGO	San Diego Creative Youth Development Networ	FUNDACIÓN Tonatiuh Gómez	San Diego Ballet
Michael Angelo Camacho **Director of Government and Field Engagement**	**Nicole Verdes** **Managing Director**	**Shayla James** **Director**	**Tonatiuh Gomez** **President of the Board**	**Matt Carney** **Executive Director**

				
Denise Montgomery **Founder & Principal**	**Erin Spiewak** **Executive Director**	**Patricia Frischer** **Founder and Coordinator**	**Bob Lehman** **Executive Director**	**Renee Richetts** **Past Chair, Escondido Arts Partnership**
Leah Goodwin **Owner**	**Danielle Bunch** **Actor and Director**	**CJ Di Mento** **Oceanside Library & Cultural Arts Director**	**Andrew Utt** **Executive Director**	**Carly Topazio,** **Artistic Director & CEO**
				
Brigid Parsons **Oceanside Arts Commission Chair, Oceanside Art Walk**	**Galina Marcus** **Founder, Executive Director**	**Michelle Lubin** **President of the Board**	**Naimeh Woodward** **President, Encinitas Friends of the Arts**	**Maricruz Alvarado** **Visual Artist**

Becky Goodman **Deputy Director of Philanthropy**	**Sharlene O'Keefe** **Executive Director**	**Patricia Frischer** **Chair**	**Alex Goodman** **Managing Director**	**Toby Batley** **Co-Artistic Director**
Eric Jones **Founder, Secretary and Treasurer**	**Adrienne Valencia** **Executive Director**	**Jessica Baron** **Founder and Executive Director**	**Sarah Holbach** **Executive Director**	**J. Scott Lapp** **Artistic Director**
Martha Gilmer **CEO**	**Alex C. Villafuerte** **Executive Director**	**Roberto D. Hernández** **Board President**	**Valentina Lunati** **Managing Director**	**Alexandra Perez Demma** **President**

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Kristianne Kurner **Executive Artistic Director**	**Linda Todd-Limon** **President**	**Signatory Name & Title**	**Signatory Name & Title**	**Signatory Name & Title**
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