



May 23, 2024

Assemblymember Sharon Quirk-Silva
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee 5
1021 O St, Suite 4210
Sacramento, CA

Senator Steve Padilla
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee 4
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Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
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Senator Scott Wiener
Chair, Senate Budget Committee
1021 O St, Suite 8620
Sacramento, CA

Subject: **Arts Budget Cuts: CAC, \$10m; CAL-OSBA Equitable Payroll Fund \$12.5m
OPPOSE**

The organizations listed below strongly oppose provisions in the May Revision of the 2024-25 California budget, which dramatically slashes funding to the California Arts Council (CAC) and entirely eliminates funding to launch the Performing Arts Equitable Payroll Fund (SB 1116, Portantino, 2022). We understand that the state is facing challenging budget deficits and needs to adjust spending, but funding for arts-related programs in California has not grown at the same rate as many other areas of the state budget and shouldn't face disproportionate treatment. In fact, ongoing general fund support for the CAC is still below the 2000-2001 funding level while the state's general fund expenditures have more than doubled over the same time period. We respectfully urge you to reject these cuts.

The May Revision proposes two cuts that will unquestionably decimate small local arts organizations. First, the proposed \$10 million cut to the CAC for Local Assistance Funding represents a 38% reduction to the \$26 million in ongoing general fund support. This proposal would reduce funding for small local arts organizations in every county to a level of general fund support first realized in the 1989-1990 budget year without even controlling for inflation. This is in addition to the May revision's 7.95% reduction to nearly all state agencies. Second, the May Revision completely eliminates \$12.5 million intended for the Equitable Payroll Fund and erases five years of building a bipartisan legislative solution to address the deleterious impacts of the pandemic along with increased payroll and operating costs on California's nonprofit performing arts organizations. In total, these two cuts represent a 58.4% reduction of state arts funding intended to reach and serve communities across all of California.

For too long, California's artists, tradition bearers, cultural organizations and creative businesses have carried the weight of the state's preeminence as a cultural producer and creative economy on their

shoulders, with only minimum sustained public investment. The Federal Bureau of Economic Analysis finds that arts and culture industries generate over 8% of California's economy, support 847,688 jobs and contribute 7.3% of state tax revenue.¹ The more localized Otis Report on California establishes that creative talent is one of driving forces of the sector and that there is a "a deep interplay between amateur, nonprofit, and commercial participants in the creative economy."² In the rural City of Watsonville, the arts and culture sector generates over \$8.8 million in total economic impact, employs 175 creative workers and brings in close to \$500,000 in local tax revenue. Silicon Valley hosts a \$385 million creative industry, employing close to 6,000 creative workers and bringing in over \$7.7 million in local tax revenue.³ The ability of local communities to leverage state public funding is vital to sustaining our sector and uplifting the California economy as a whole.

We urge the Legislature to recognize the drastic nature of these cuts and the destabilizing threats they pose to the livelihoods of the creative workforce and to the promise of core California values. In particular, it is critical to acknowledge that these cuts will hurt the most vulnerable of arts organizations and arts workers including those located in rural communities and communities of color.

Consider the following:

SHOULD CALIFORNIA RANK 45TH FOR FUNDING OUR STATE ARTS AGENCY? - CAC funding is lower than it was two decades ago. Funding for the CAC also grew very slowly after the budget challenges of the 2000's, with general fund support at the minimum necessary (approximately \$1million) to obtain federal matching funds for over a decade. Since 2018-19, general fund support has plateaued at \$26 million – just .67 cents per California resident, ranking the state 36th in the nation in per capita arts spending. In contrast, Florida spends almost \$2.00 per resident. The \$10 million cut to the CAC budget would position California at 45th in the nation in local arts assistance funding, just above Kentucky, Kansas and Georgia.⁴

ARTS FUNDING DIRECTLY SUPPORTS JOBS - Cutting \$12.5 million in funding for the implementation of SB 1116 will directly impact job retention and creation in communities across California. That legislation is designed to support the operations of small nonprofit community performing arts organizations, which have faced unique operational challenges along with early and enduring closures and capacity restrictions related to COVID-19. This legislation had bipartisan support and was co-sponsored by labor and management because of the impact on jobs, community, and culture. Similarly, grants from the CAC go directly to creating opportunities for artists, performers, and the organizations that support them.

ARTS PUBLIC FUNDING IS EQUITABLY DISTRIBUTED - Public funding is critical to ensuring equitable access to arts and culture experiences and to opportunities to develop and sustain creative careers. Lack of public investment perpetuates an overreliance on philanthropy which is concentrated in urban and affluent areas. CAC grants reach all 58 counties and are more equitably distributed to underserved groups and regions than private funding.⁵ Similarly, the Equitable Payroll Fund will serve small live arts nonprofits in every county across the State, enabling them to grow and sustain jobs for the most vulnerable creative workers.

ARTS GENERATE DOWNSTREAM BENEFITS - According to the National Endowment for the Arts, every \$1 in public arts funding leverages an additional \$9 in local and private investment.⁶ And a 2023 report found that for every 100 Performing Arts jobs in 2021, an additional 156 jobs were supported in other sectors.⁵ When arts funding is pulled, other businesses will suffer including restaurants, hotels, retail and the overall economic health of downtown communities.

ACCESS TO ARTS, CULTURE AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION IS A CORE SERVICE that delivers a variety of positive societal benefits. From poetry workshops for veterans experiencing PTSD, to mariachi bands bringing warmth and dignity to food distribution lines, to neighborhood mentoring programs for youth to develop creative careers, to performing arts groups providing critical jobs and tourism attractions, to public art and cultural programs serving as the go-to asset for local governments revitalizing neighborhoods, California's arts community is providing goods and services that are essential to the state's wellbeing, community health and economic success.

While we understand that every sector and agency must play their part to balance the budget, the proposed cuts place a disproportionate burden on the California arts workers and nonprofits that, unlike other areas of state government, have not grown substantially during the good budget years. The California Arts Council is already functioning at a cut-level and the performing arts community is facing unprecedented challenges. We believe these modest investments deliver outsized impacts (cultural enrichment, mental health benefits, economic impact) for the state and must be protected.

We urge you to reject the proposed 58% cut to small and nonprofit community arts organizations across California.

Sincerely,



Julie Baker
CEO, CA Arts Advocates



Brandon Lorenz
Actors' Equity Association



Martha Demson
TPSCA

References:

¹ U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. [report link](#)

² 2023 Otis College Report on the Creative Economy. [report link](#)

³ American Economic Prosperity Report, Americans for the Arts, 2023. [report link](#)

⁴ National Association of State Arts Agencies. [webpage link](#)

⁴ Equity Challenges in California's Arts Ecosystem, California Arts Council, 2022. [report link](#)

⁵ Arts Investment Fact Sheet, National Endowment for the Arts. [webpage link](#)

⁶ The Role of Live Performing Arts in Revitalizing California Communities, CVL Economics, 2023. [report link](#)

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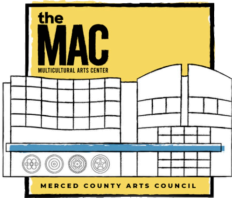
Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O St, Suite 9000
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President Pro Tem Mike McGuire
1021 O St, Suite 8518
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Speaker Robert Rivas
1021 O St, Suite 8330
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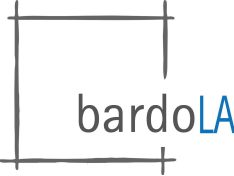
				
Megan Van Voorhis Director of Convention & Cultural Services	Kristin Reese Executive Director	Jacquie Atchison Executive Director	Jim Brown Executive Director Sarah Brothers Arts Education Director	Laurie Livingston Executive Director
				
Jim Kocher Executive Director	Aimee Shapiro Executive Director Lois Fried, Commissioner	Jenny Balise Executive Founding Director	Rachael A Dzikonski, Executive Director	Daniel LoPilato Executive Director Colusa County Arts Council
				
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Christopher DeNatale President & CEO	Amy Kitchener Executive Director	Rachel Osajima Director	Cara Goger Executive Director	Tara Thompson Director

				
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Nicole Monet Executive Director	Jennifer de Poyen Executive Director	Cathryn Carkhuff Julia Murphy/ Founders	Ann Kaneko and Jin Yoo-Kim Partners, InterSection Films	Steve Dille Executive Director The Veterans Art Project
				
Rafael Gonzalez, President & CEO	Jan Williamson Executive Director	Usha Srinivasan President & CEO	Giselle Rocha	Ralph Remington Director of Cultural Affairs

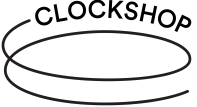
 San José Arts Advocates	 EMERGING Arts PROFESSIONALS SAN FRANCISCO / BAY AREA	 LIVING JAZZ	 YUBA SUTTER arts & CULTURE	 AUBURN HIP HOP CONGRESS
Peter Allen Founding Member	Rhiannon Evans MacFadyen Director	Lyz Luke Executive Director	David Read Executive Director	Angela Tahti Documentation Specialist
 CITY LIGHTS THEATER COMPANY	 FULCRUM ARTS		 dancers group	 music at kohl mansion
Anne Younan General Manager	Robert Takahashi Novak, Executive & Artistic Director	Mark Seldis Producing Director	Wayne Hazzard Executive Director	Patricia Kristof Moy Executive Director
 KONTRAPUNKTUS	 YMTCA	 Entertainment Community Fund	 HANDY FOUNDATION CREATING PATHWAYS TO DIVERSITY	 LAO
Raymond D. Jacobs Executive Director	Jennifer Boesing Youth Musical Theater Company Producing Artistic Director	Keith McNutt, Executive Director Western Region	Ri-Karlo Handy Founder/CEO Handy Foundation	Christopher Koelsch, President & CEO Los Angeles Opera
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Emmanuel Deleage Executive Director, Casa 0101 Theater	Leticia Rhi Buckley CEO, La Plaza de Cultura y Artes	Darin Anthony Artistic Director, Moving Arts Theatre	Gregory Crafts Executive Director, Theatre Unleashed	Ana Rose O'Halloran Producing Executive Director,
				
Peter Ellenstein, Producing Artistic Director	Charles Duncombe Executive Director	Armando Molina Artistic Director Martin Hernandez	Eduardo Estrada	Melanie Elvena Artistic Director

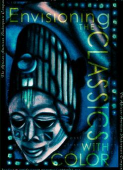
				
Calder Johnson, Executive Director	Silvia Regalado-Zachlod, Executive Director	Gil Cates, Jr. Executive Director & CEO	Sharmi Basu Executive Director Nica Estrella Chavarria, Engagement Manager	Shira Cion, Executive Artistic Director
				
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 Dancing Through Prison Walls			EDGE ON THE SQUARE 藝在棱角	
Suchi Branfman, Artistic Director	Anastacia Powers Executive Director	Elizabeth Lisle, Managing Director	Joanne Lee Executive Director	Marianne Clark, Administrative Director
				
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				 Sacramento Chinese Community Service Center
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Ben Donenberg, Founder & Artistic Director	Jamie Azpeitia-Sachs, Artistic Director	Fátima Ramírez Executive Director	Josh Welsh President	Sue Bell Yank Executive Director

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Gary Reece Executive Director	Anne Brown Executive Director	Jim Kleinmann, Artistic Director	Alex Opsahl, Executive Director	Roberto Ordeñana, Executive Director

				
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Heidi Basch-Harod Executive Director	E. Bonnie Lewis & Ken Gilbert, Artistic Directors	Larry Laboe, Co-Founder and Executive Director	Jeannine Wisnosky Stehlin, Managing Director	Trami Cron, Executive Artistic Director
				
Jessica Bird Beza, Executive Artistic Director	Cindy Abbott, Executive Director	Ellen Anderson, Artistic Director	Buddy Hale, Founder	Sherri Young, Executive Director and Founder
				
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Good People Theater Company				
Janet Miller Producing Artistic Director	Scott Watkins CEO Stockton Symphony	Karin Reenstierna Executive Director	Dave Pier, Executive Director	Becky Whatley, Executive Director

				
Kim Maxwell, Founder & Principal	Mauel Prieto, Managing Director	Delgreta Brown Visual Artist & Art Administrator	Joy Dittberner Executive Director	Sylvia Amorino Gonzalez, Executive Director
				
Cathlyn Choi, Executive Director	Ravi Abcarian Executive Director	Nancy Davis Artistic Producing Director, Town Street Theatre	Ann Watts Executive Director	Oanh Nguyen Executive Artistic Director
				
Lorrie Murray Founder, Executive Director	Donna Sternberg, Artistic Director	Jan Zvaifer & Gary Graves Co-directors	Susan "Star" Greenwood, Program Director	Kay Weber Art Director/ Artist & Art Educator
				
Maeva (My•ÉÉÉ•vuh) Artist & Founder Artistically Elevated Design	Ellen Denherder, Co-Executive Director	Susana Peredo Swap, Executive Director	Allegra Padilla, Executive Director	Natalie Conneely, Director Of Development

				
Quentin Ring, Executive Director	Audrey Joseph Founder	Elina de Santos Co-Artistic Director	Julie Hochfeld, Poetry Grant Recipient	Nicole Verdes, Managing Director
				
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Arts Works Downtown Elisabeth Setten	California Jazz Conservatory Nick Phillips	The San Francisco Early Music Society Derek Tam	4C Lab Marissa Herrera	African Human Rights Coalition Melanie Nathan
Akoma Unity Center Kimberly Calvin	Amazing Grace Conservatory Jackie Honore-Elam	Ammunition Theater Susan Dalian	Art Tonic Justina Martino	Artists at Play Marie-Reine Velez
Another Bullwinkel Show Lisa Bullwinkel	Arts District San Pedro Linda Grimes	At Last Productions Angela Lloyd	Avenue 50 Studio, Inc Kathleen Gallegos	Ballet Folklórico Anahuac Liduvina Gonzalez
di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art Andrea Saenz	Beautiful Soundworks Mandolyn Mystic Ludlum	Black Box Studio Thuyen Tran	Ensemble Studio Theatre/LA Tracey Leigh	California Commission on Sexual Exploitation Tiara King

Creative Coaching for Arts & Equity Elizabeth Harvey	Calliope: East Bay Music & Arts Christine Staples	Center ARTES at Cal State San Marcos Merryl Goldberg	Charlotte Katherine and Co Charlotte Smith	The Contemporary Jewish Museum Andrea Morgan
Independent artist Sarah Cusey	AHA Projects Cheyanne Sauter	CounterPulse Julie Phielps	Daughters 2 Feed Foster Corder	De la vega design Christine Jenne
Gallo Center for the Arts Chad Hilligus	Downtown Modesto Partnership Stephanie Foster	E&M Presents, Inc. Evy Warshawski	Dare to Dance in Public Film Festival Sarah Elgart	Full Capacity Entertainment Cory Ness
Woodland Opera House Andrea St. Clair	Inlandia Institute Cati Porter	First Exposures Erik Auerbach	Galeria de la Raza Ani Rivera	Ground Series Brittany Delany
Young Storytellers Bill Thompson	Santa Maria Philharmonic Society Elizabeth Kinney	Grabhorn Institute Rolph Blythe	Green Rose Productions Rosalinda Alexander	Equinox Center for Education John Schmidt
Chinese Performing Arts of America Lihong Zhang	Kid City Hope Place Angelita Sanchez	Inner-City Arts Shelby Williams-Gonzalez	Joshua Tree Center for Creative Arts Robert Rootenberg	Sustainable Little Tokyo & Community Arts Hirokazu Kosaka
Grand Vision Foundation Elizabeth Johnson	The Center for Cultural Power Anna Maria Luera	KDA Krissy Warren	Kearny Street Workshop Inc Mihee Kim	The Young Shakespeareans Alison Korman
Hacker Lab Gina Lujan	Kattumaram LLC Anu Ramamurty	Transform Through Arts Yulia Maluta	Man One Art Alejandro Poli Jr.	Project [BLANK] Leslie Leytham
Tidepool Pictures and Riviera Productions Jennie Reinish	Mendocino Poets in the Schools Blake More	Interact Theatre Company Barry Heins	Musica Sierra Linsay McIntosh	Palo Alto Art Center Carol Kenyon
OnStage Theatre Arts Cynthia Speakman	Generation Music & Arts Academy Cynthia Goco-Nakar	San Diego Museum Council Bob Lehman	The Lost Church.org Brett Cline	Compound Yucca Valley Caroline Partamian
Public Glass Mari Gorski	Launch Productions, Inc / Launch LA James Panozzo	Developing Environments Gabrielle Thormann	Dance Kaiso Robin Frey	Give a Beat Lauren Segal
SUN SPOT Gai Kearn	Roxie Theater Lex Sloan	Lines Ballet May Harr-Siebenlist	Lynne Todaro Studio Lynne Todaro	MainStreet Oceanside Gumaro Escarcega

Tenderloin Museum Katherine Conry	Overtone Industries Elizabeth Eldridge	Creativity Explored	The Victory Theatre Center Maria Gobetti	Inlakech Cultural Arts Center Javier Gomez
Pasadena Pro Musica Deanne Hendricks	Space 4 Art Sam Mazzeo	Valley Opera and Performing Arts Shira Thomas	Positional Projects Karyl Newman	ODC Theater Chloë Zimberg
Rosanna Gamson/World Wide, Inc. Rosanna Gamson	San Diego Dance Theater Terry Wilson	Pacific Symphony John Forsyte	WeidnerCA Will Rodriguez	Rosanna Gamson/World Wide, Inc. Rosanna Gamson
NTC Foundation ARTS DISTRICT Liberty Station James Halliday	SFJAZZ (San Francisco Jazz Organization) Rebeca Mauleón	San José Multicultural Artists Guild Viera Whye	Santa Barbara Shakespeare Melissa Marino	School of Arts and Culture at MHP Vanessa Shieh
WEAD Women Eco Artists Dialog Mary White	The Able Table Sarah Hankins	Sierra Madre Playhouse Ward Calaway	Sun Spot Gail Kearns	Storybook Theatre of Los Angeles Lloyd Schwartz
Kajun Design Patricia Koren	Artists Resisting Exploitation Annah Sidigu	Village Arts John Moser	San Jose Jazz Bruce Labadie	Brockus Project Dance Company Patrick Mignano
Local Color Carman Gaines	Plum Tree Pottery Jan Schachter	Sequoia Symphony Orchestra Joshua Banda	Valerie Troutt Projects	Because Of Black Music IAM Valerie Troutt Co/Founder
San José Multicultural Artists Guild Vera Whye	Terra Cultura Rachel Wohlander	Kid City Hope Place Angelita Sanchez	Lines Ballet Maya Harr-Siebenlist	Sol Collective Ruby Avila
San Bernardino Valley College Kamphoune Syphengpheth	Luna Dance & Creativity John-Mario Sevilla	Made New Foundation Shannon Royster	Rapt Productions Linsday Gauthier	The Dance Network Karyn Laver