

MAINE ARTS COMMISSION

Testimony

Amy Hausmann, Executive Director

132nd Maine Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

LD 210 – “An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2025, June 30, 2026, and June 30, 2027.”

February 7, 2025

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gatine, members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs; Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, I am Amy Hausmann, Executive Director of the Maine Arts Commission. I began serving in August 2024.

I am speaking in support of the Maine Arts Commission items in the Biennial Budget, which appear on pages A-106 to A-109 of the budget proposal.

Introduction

Maine's state government began officially supporting the arts in 1933 when the Legislature created the Maine Arts Commission (MAC) to serve in an advisory capacity to the Governor. In 1966, the agency's scope expanded to support the arts statewide.

The Maine Arts Commission fosters and encourages public interest and participation in the cultural heritage and artistic expression of our state. The Commission fulfills its mission through partnerships and collaborations, outreach and initiatives, information sharing, and grants for organizations, artists, and communities throughout Maine.

The Maine Arts Commission, an independent state agency, is governed by a board appointed by the Governor, based on their interest and experience in the arts and related fields.

2025-2027 Budget**ARTS – ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM 0178 (page A-107):**

First, the Maine Arts Commission has a General Fund appropriation (**\$1,144,347** for 2025-26 and **\$1,186,149** in 2026-27) which includes **Personal Services** that covers salaries for six positions. **All Other** covers arts programming, including artist fellowships and apprenticeships, exhibitions, literary arts (including the Maine Poet Laureate), partnerships to provide free statewide artist services, percent for art/public art and departmental operations.

***Artist Fellowships:** Fine Craft, Literary Arts, Media Arts, Performing Arts, Traditional Arts, Visual Arts*

***The Maine and New Hampshire Craft Apprentice Program** in partnership with Maine Crafts Association*

Exhibitions:

- ***Art in the Capital:** Exhibitions presenting work from artists throughout Maine*
- ***Celebration of Art & Agriculture:** A year-long exhibition on rural agriculture, with sales and state interest for future exhibitions*
- ***State of Maine Employee Art Show** partnership with National Arts Program*
- ***Veteran Artist Exhibition:** Featuring 45 veteran artists*
- ***Congressional Art Exhibit and Maine Excellence in Arts Education/Scholastic Arts & Literary Awards.***

***Literary Arts:** Poet Laureate statewide programs*

Partnership/Artist Services:

- ***Assets for Artists:** Partner with Mass MOCA for free statewide professional development webinars*
- ***Creative Ground:** Free online database/website for Maine artists, available through MAC membership in the New England Foundation for the Arts*

***Percent for Art:** Administer the Maine State Percent for Art policy across the state*

Three Initiatives include:

\$8,727: An increase from OITS for technological services.

\$53,342: Funding to restore a part-time position to full-time. This Regional Development Director position will help the agency fulfill its strategic plan by expanding its services and presence statewide, with a focus on the Central Uplands, North Woods, Downeast, Acadian, and border regions of Maine.

This position will:

- *Develop ways to sustain communities' arts and heritage assets*
- *Link cultural work with wider community agendas*
- *Research and identify MAC's services and funding gaps in these regions*
- *Build strategic partnerships with state and local agencies and nonprofits*

\$8,203: Increased funding for DAFS to provide financial and human resources services.

ARTS – GENERAL GRANTS PROGRAM 0177 (page A-108):

This program was created to receive and document the use of federal funds during COVID. Our request is to reduce the current placeholder amount of **\$357,051** and establish a placeholder of **\$500** to keep it available for possible future receipt of any federal funds.

ARTS – SPONSORED PROGRAM 0176 (page A-109):

Represents federal funding allocated from the National Endowment for the Arts. **Program:** **Federal Expenditures Fund** include **Personal Services:** \$435,274 covers personnel expenses for four positions. **All Other:** \$759,000 covers expenses for grants and special projects administered by MAC. These include artist, organizational and community grants, and special project grants for programs such as:

- **Creative Communities Grant:** Supports community-driven, arts-based projects
- **Organizational Operations Grants**
- **Artist Project and Artist Springboard Grants**
- **Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program**
- **Creative Aging Program** partnership with Maine Council on Aging focused on artist connections and age positivity
- **Rural Arts Connect:** Arts Education training program in partnership with Side x Side to provide arts experiences in underserved rural areas across the state
- **Aroostook Creative Network** micro-grants (Aroostook County)
- **Poetry Out Loud:** A national literary program for high school students

Program: Other Special Revenue Funds: Includes revenue for special grants, projects, or initiatives, including federal, private, and state percent for art fees received by MAC.

The Maine Arts Commission developed and adopted a strategic plan in 2023 which sets forth guidance for our work including four pillars: Service, Connection, Funding, and Advancing. Using this strategic roadmap, MAC collaborates with artists, organizations and partners across the state to shape creative, vibrant and healthy communities for all Mainers. We appreciate your interest and are grateful for your support.

Thank you for your time today. I'd be happy to answer questions or provide additional information.