



Cultural Alliance of Maine & Maine Association of Nonprofits

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF LD 1641

An Act To Ensure Continued Access to Film and Stage Theaters and Music Venues
MAY 6, 2021

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts and esteemed members of the Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement & Business, I am Carla Pugliese, Director of the Pilot Year of the Cultural Alliance of Maine, a project within the Maine Association of Nonprofits.

The Cultural Alliance of Maine (CAM) is a grassroots, statewide initiative designed to bring together Maine's rich and diverse cultural communities in a thriving, collaborative, unified ecosystem with the goal of increasing the sector's visibility, impact, and resources. Less than two months into its pilot year, CAM represents cultural organizations and artists from all 16 counties of Maine.

MANP's mission is to enrich the quality of Maine's communities by strengthening the leadership, voice, and organizational effectiveness of our state's nonprofits. MANP represents nearly 1000 nonprofit organizations and 200 corporate supporters from every part of the state and of all sizes and mission areas.

On behalf of the members of both organizations, this testimony is in Support of LD 1641, An Act To Ensure Continued Access to Film and Stage Theaters and Music Venues.

In data released this spring, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reported that in 2019 the arts and cultural sector in Maine added \$1.7 billion dollars to the state economy and employed over 17,000 Mainers. Maine's nonprofit sector is the largest employment sector in the state - 1 in 6 workers is employed by a nonprofit. However, most nonprofits in Maine are also small businesses - 89% have annual budgets of \$500,000 or less and 77% have annual budgets of \$100,000 or less. They want to provide their employees with good wages, good working conditions, benefits, and opportunity for advancement and growth.

In the past year, cultural organizations and arts venues have introduced innumerable innovative programs to make their work accessible to a quarantined audience in a digital landscape. Across the state, they have seen community engagement – already so significant – grow, as folks turned to the arts to help process the upheaval of the past 13 months. At the same time, these organizations and artists have had to shut down nearly all of their revenue generating programs, and many do not foresee a full programmatic return until 2022. Integral to our communities, and our economy, they deserve our support.

Thank you for considering LD 1641. I am happy to answer any questions and provide more information after the hearing.