Dear Representative,

On behalf of the 400 arts and cultural organizations and 16,000 individual advocates across the Commonwealth, MASSCreative would like to thank House leadership and the House Ways and Means Committee for the proposed $22.4 million for line item 0640-0300, to support the arts and cultural sector across the Commonwealth through the Mass Cultural Council. The allocation recognizes the significant impact that artists and arts and cultural nonprofits deliver to every city and town in Massachusetts and is a $2 million increase from Governor Baker’s proposal.

Between March 2020 and March 2021, the creative economy was drastically impacted by the required COVID-19 pandemic closures with 981 arts and cultural nonprofit organizations from across Massachusetts reporting $588.3 million in pandemic-related losses. Nearly 3,000 creative workers in Massachusetts lost over $30 million during that same time. Many of these businesses have since reopened but with decreased attendance and depleted reserves. The annual grant programs funded through line item 06400-0300 are essential for organizations and individual creative workers to continue work our communities require.

Given the urgent need among arts and cultural nonprofits and the communities they serve, MASSCreative would like to express our support for Representative Fernandes’ amendment #1081 which would increase line item 0640-0300 for the Mass Cultural Council to $27.4 million. This amount represents the highest historic amount the agency ever received in 1988. We feel strongly that returning to this high-water mark in the FY2023 is necessary to ensure that every resident of the Commonwealth receives the economic and social benefits that are derived from creative expression and cultural participation.

Please co-sponsor Representative Fernandes’ amendment #1081.

As always, should you or your staff have any questions regarding our support for this amendment, we are happy to chat.

Thank you for your service to your district and the residents of the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Emily Ruddock
Executive Director
MASSCreative