



**BEFORE THE SENATE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
DAVID MEUSE, OHIO CITIZENS FOR THE ARTS**

MAY 25, 2017

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is David Meuse and I am the Principal of Stonehenge Partners, a member of the Columbus Partnership, and the past chairman of the board for The Columbus Foundation and the Columbus Association for the Performing Arts (CAPA). I am here today, joined by Ohio Citizens for the Arts Executive Director Bill Behrendt and Ohio Arts Council Executive Director Donna Collins, representing hundreds of thousands of Ohioans who participate in the arts in all 88 counties of our state.

Last week, Ohio Citizens for the Arts partnered with the Ohio Arts Council to produce Arts Day and the Governor's Awards for the Arts. For those of you who attended, you heard first-hand the many reasons to support arts funding. Today, I'd simply like to highlight two of those reasons: how arts funding generates economic benefits and how the arts strengthen education.

The arts sector plays a central role in economic development and job creation in Ohio. We know this from a recent research study conducted by the Center for Regional Development at Bowling Green State University, which shows that the creative industries support nearly 231,000 jobs and contribute almost \$32 billion to the state's economy. The arts attract new businesses and skilled workers, draw tourists and services to support them, create and retain jobs, and produce tax revenue—something our state could use right now. The arts generate approximately \$3.4 billion in tax revenues annually, and this number reinforces what we've always known: The arts mean economic growth for Ohio.

In addition to being an economic engine, the arts also play a crucial role in the education of young Ohioans. There is overwhelming evidence from generations of research that proves conclusively that students who participate in the arts consistently outperform non-arts peers in math, science, creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, communication and collaboration, flexibility and adaptability, and social and cross cultural skills. The knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors students acquire from studying the arts has been identified as the skills needed to be successful in a global economy. The arts benefit students by providing them with the necessary skills to succeed in life.

This is not only evident in K-12 education, but also in higher education. Locally, *Medicine in the Arts*, created by Dr. Linda Stone of The Ohio State University College of Medicine, is an example of an amazing program which provides the opportunity for medical students to participate in the arts. The program intertwines arts, medicine, and learning, directly benefiting medical students by decreasing stress and promoting healing through art. Dr. Stone has received an award from the American Medical Association for her work, as well as being honored last week as a recipient of a Governor's Award for the Arts in Ohio.



While we recognize that this is a tight budget year, when you put into perspective the role the arts play as both an economic driver and as an educational investment in our students, requesting funding for the arts is simply requesting for our state to realize the full potential of Ohio's creative industries and invest in the people of Ohio.

At Stonehenge, when we invest in companies we are keenly interested in the culture of the company. The culture, in many cases, is more important than the strategy, because the culture creates the customer's brand awareness and sustainability. Likewise, a strong arts and cultural sector is an essential piece in creating sustainability for communities, and making them creative, prosperous, and attractive places to live, work, and raise a family.

I hope you will consider what the arts do for the state and for its people during your budget deliberations. Thank you for your time, and thank you for your continued support of the arts in our great state.