Georgia Arts Advocacy Leaders Unite in Call for an Increase in State Arts Funding

Atlanta, Ga. - ArtsGeorgia and the Georgia Arts Network, Georgia's arts advocacy leaders, have jointly drafted a declaration in support of an increase in state funding for the arts for fiscal year 2015. They are calling upon Georgia's artists and arts organizations to join them in support of this unified effort to appeal to the Governor and state legislators to increase the state arts budget. The joint declaration states:

> "CALL FOR AN INCREASE IN STATE ARTS FUNDING
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> The Georgia Council for the Arts budget was severely cut in 2008 from $4 Million Dollars to its current level of $586,466. This has resulted in a significant reduction in the available programs and services that the GCA is able to deliver to the arts industry in Georgia. The current budget profoundly limits the grants program, leaving some of Georgia's valuable arts organizations without well-deserved and much-needed support. It caused Georgia to be ranked 50th in the country in per capita spending and adversely affects an industry that employs over 200,000 Georgians. As a consequence, many of the community-based and fine arts organizations, large and small, throughout the state, struggle to continue serving their audiences and their communities. We call on Governor Deal and the General Assembly to include an increase in state arts funding in support of the arts industry as a jobs sector and its significant impact throughout Georgia."
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> Information on the economic impact of the arts, the number of jobs affected and the value of arts in education which support our call for an increase can be found in the SouthArts publication, *Creative Industries in the South (Georgia)(2012)*, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices publication, *New Engines of Growth: Five Roles For Arts, Culture and Design (2012),* and the National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, *Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools 1999-2000 and 2009-10*
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> Respectfully submitted as a Joint Statement by ArtsGeorgia and the Georgia Arts Network and joined by the Georgia Association of Museums and Galleries."

Other arts organizations or individuals who wish to join in supporting the call for an increase in state arts funding for FY2015 should contact either the Georgia Arts Network at advocacy@gaartsnetwork.org or ArtsGeorgia at artsga@artsgeorgia.org.

About ArtsGeorgia
ArtsGeorgia works to support the arts by providing resources for Georgia's arts and cultural community to raise awareness, strengthen advocacy, facilitate communication, build capacity and develop policy. ArtsGeorgia, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit statewide arts service corporation, is a National CoSponsor of AFTA's National Arts Advocacy Day. For more information, visit http://www.artsgeorgia.net/

About Georgia Arts Network
The mission of the Georgia Arts Network is to strengthen, connect, and advocate for the arts, artists, and arts education in Georgia. Georgia Arts Network, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit statewide arts service corporation, is the official state affiliate of Americans for the Arts, the national arts advocacy organization and is a Grassroots Partner of AFTA's National Arts Advocacy Day. For more information, visit *www.GaArtsNetwork.org*.

About Georgia Association of Museums & Galleries
The mission of the Georgia Association of Museums and Galleries is to serve the entire state of Georgia as a private, non-profit museum and gallery association. The Georgia Association of Museums and Galleries, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit statewide arts service corporation, is dedicated to serving a diverse membership in a way that establishes a responsive network, provides a resource base and promotes professionalism so that Georgia's museum community is strong, effective and proactive. For more information, visit http://www.gamg.org/