
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

March 24, 2011

Ald. Nik Kovac
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Council Members Oppose Cuts to Arts Funding

The Common Council passed a measure during yesterday's meeting that opposes Governor Walker's proposed funding cuts to the Wisconsin Arts Board for the 2011-13 budget years. The governor's proposal would mean a loss of nearly 70% of the board's funding and would eliminate the agency's autonomy by placing it within the Department of Tourism.

"I don't think the governor hates the arts; I think he and his advisors need to hear more about the amazing catalyst for business and jobs that arts funding can be. Milwaukee has endless examples where arts—whether from theater performances or public art—have reinvented and propelled business districts," said Alderman Murphy, who serves as chair of the Milwaukee Arts Board.

The Council's resolution posits that the Wisconsin Arts Board, among other things, "nurtures creativity...supports the arts in education, stimulates community and economic development and serves as a resource for people of every culture and heritage." During the meeting, multiple members of the Council also signed on to the legislation directed at the state Legislature, citing the grants our own Arts Board has distributed within the community and the leverage the "Percent for Art" program offers public buildings to enhance their presence in urban environments.

Alderman Nik Kovac said the arts are "a broad category with deep influence we don't always readily recognize."

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Council Opposes Arts Cuts/ADD ONE

“The influence of arts projects includes not only the economy they produce in ticket sales and drivers to our other business areas, but also in the contribution they give through inspiration, achievement and beautification of our area,” Alderman Kovac said.

“Every person who comes through our city is influenced by art—whether they realize it or not. We cannot risk losing that which makes our city beautiful, livable, and prosperous,” Alderman Kovac said.

The arts funding matter will also be discussed during the next Milwaukee Arts Board meeting on Tuesday, April 12, 2011 in room 301-A at City Hall. The public is welcome to attend.

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