



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
MARTIN J. WALSH

October 31, 2019

Senator Edward J. Kennedy
Chair, Joint Committee on Arts, Tourism
and Culture
State House, Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Paul McMurtry
Chair, Joint Committee on Arts, Tourism
and Culture
State House, Room 171
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chair Kennedy, Chair McMurtry, and Members of the Committee:

Today, I write in strong support of H.2943/S.2021, *A Resolve to evaluate existing funding for the promotion of, and workforce development, tourism, arts and culture*, filed by Representative Michlewitz and Senator Collins to establish a commission that will explore ways to raise money and invest in Tourism, Arts and Culture in Massachusetts.

Under my Administration, Boston released *Boston Creates*, the first cultural plan in the city's history, which lays out a blueprint for how Boston can truly be a national municipal arts leader. One of the flagship initiatives from *Boston Creates* is the City's first ever Percent for Art program, which allocates one percent of the City's capital borrowing for the commission of permanent public artworks. We just unveiled the City's first piece of permanent public art in nearly five years in the North End, and the Percent for Art program has allowed us to begin projects in Roxbury, Fenway, Jamaica Plain, and East Boston.

Over the next five years, the City is committing an unprecedented \$13.4 million to the Percent for Art Program. This, combined with \$80,000 for temporary public art projects in the next year and several new City staff positions, is the most funding the City has ever dedicated to public art. We have also engaged partners that include support for more than 220 arts organizations through Boston Cultural Council grants, the City of Boston has also dedicated over \$2.5 million in the past year toward arts programming, by investing in more than 200 individual artists, and over 90 free arts experiences for all residents to enjoy.

We acknowledge the great work happening across the state in the arts and culture sector, and this bill if passed would give us a vehicle to better support and coordinate all of our efforts. By dedicating a commission to explore the ways we do this work on a state-wide level, Massachusetts will be able to grow as a leader in the arts, culture and history. I respectfully request your support of this bill and thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly or you may contact Alyssa Ring in the Office of Intergovernmental Relations at (617) 635-1994.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. J. Walsh', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Martin J. Walsh
Mayor of Boston