

NLGA Consensus Resolution Recognizing the Economic Contributions of Arts and Culture

WHEREAS, arts and culture are important contributors to the nation's economy, supporting jobs, generating government revenue, strengthening local businesses, and contributing to the economic vitality of states and communities; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reported that arts and cultural production contributed \$1.17 trillion to the U.S. economy in 2023, representing 4.2% of gross domestic product (GDP) and supporting approximately 5.4 million jobs [1]; and

WHEREAS, arts and cultural production grew by 6.6% in 2023, more than twice the 2.9% growth of the overall U.S. economy, and generated a \$36.8 billion international trade surplus [1]; and

WHEREAS, Americans for the Arts' *Arts & Economic Prosperity 6* study found that the nonprofit arts and culture industry and its audiences generated \$151.7 billion in economic activity in 2022, supporting 2.6 million jobs and generating \$29.1 billion in local, state, and federal government revenue [2]; and

WHEREAS, arts and culture audiences generate additional spending for local businesses, averaging \$38.46 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission on meals, parking, lodging, and other purchases [2]; and

WHEREAS, arts and culture are important drivers of tourism, with 30% of arts event attendees traveling from outside the county where the event took place, spending an average of \$60.57 beyond admission, and 77% of those nonlocal attendees reporting that they traveled to the community specifically to attend the arts and culture event [2]; and

WHEREAS, research by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Endowment for the Arts found that rural communities with performing arts organizations are more likely to have innovative businesses, highlighting the contributions of arts and culture to rural economic development [3]; and

WHEREAS, a national public opinion survey by Americans for the Arts found that 70% of Americans agree the arts improve their community's image and identity, and 53% consider arts and cultural experiences when selecting a vacation destination [4];

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA) recognizes arts and culture as important contributors to state and local economies, supporting jobs, businesses, tourism, and economic growth.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NLGA encourages state and territorial leaders to consider arts and culture within economic and community development strategies, including opportunities to invest in state arts agencies and efforts to strengthen local businesses,

37 expand cultural tourism, support creative workers, and promote economic vitality in urban and
38 rural communities.

39 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that NLGA encourages state and territorial leaders to explore
40 policies and incentives that support cultural districts, creative corridors, innovation hubs, and
41 other arts-based economic development initiatives that attract creative talent and encourage
42 business investment [5, 6].

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44 **ADOPTED**, this ___ day of December, 2026.

45 **Co-Sponsors:** *TBD following approval.*

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47 *Proposed for the docket by:* Americans for the Arts, NLGA Partner

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49 References

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