

## ELEVATING THE CULTURAL CAPITAL OF COLORADO

### INCREASE LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS TO STATE ARTS AGENCIES

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#### **ACTION NEEDED:**

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We urge Governor Hickenlooper to:

- Continue his ongoing public support of Colorado artists, and to solidify his support through increasing legislative appropriations to existing Colorado State Arts Agencies.
- Continue to support Senate Bill 13-1333, which restored funding to Colorado Creative Industries, as well as House Bill 13-1208, which expands the ability of Colorado Creative Industries to support communities through the establishment of creative districts within Colorado.

#### **TALKING POINTS:**

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- Governor Hickenlooper's administration has been a vocal proponent of the necessity of creative industries to strengthen the economy, however, legislative appropriation does not reflect this support. It is not enough to simply be a champion of the arts. The administration must be willing to lend credibility to creative industries through legislative financial support.
- Prior to the election of Governor Hickenlooper and the approvals of SB 13-1333 and HB 13-1208, Colorado ranked 45 out of 50 for allocation of state funds to the arts. Colorado now ranks 42, a number that does not reflect the cultural economy that this administration claims to prioritize.
- Reappropriation of funds within the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade would be a viable method of increasing state support for the arts and creative industries. Currently, the funds in the General Budget allocate \$2,000,000 to state arts agencies and over \$13,000,000 to the tourism industry. Cultural tourism is on the rise, and money reallocated from tourism to state arts agencies can be just as beneficial to Colorado's economy, if not more so.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

The state currently ranks fifth among all states for concentration of artists, and sixth in the nation in the percentage of its workforce involved in creative occupations, however, rural populations are often underrepresented in the Colorado creative industries, by virtue of distance from major urban centers and economic scarcity.

Colorado's heritage includes the hard work and involvement of Latino and Native American populations, but knowledge of this history is significantly reduced due to expansion of private corporations around the state. For these underrepresented populations, more substantial funding from the state to help preserve their culture would make a tremendous impact, and also create a new perspective in Colorado's cultural economy.

A recent report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development found that cultural tourists spend substantially more than standard tourists, and that cultural tourism is generally becoming more popular throughout the world. Since art is synonymous with culture, it makes sense for Governor Hickenlooper to authorize

increased monetary support for local creative artists.