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November 18, 2009

Mayor Pamela Goldsmith-Jones
Councillor Lewis
Councillor Panz
Councillor Soprovich
Councillor Evison
Councillor Smith
Councillor Walker
District of West Vancouver
750 - 17th Street,
West Vancouver, BC V7V 3T3

Dear Mayor and Councillors;

As West Vancouver has identified arts and culture as one of the pillars of our community, and in so doing recognizes the values and impact of this sector on our society, we are asking Mayor and Council to join the Metro Vancouver Board in passing a motion on restoring the Provincial government's cuts to arts and culture investment.

In so doing, the District of West Vancouver will demonstrate extraordinary leadership and commitment by putting forward a positive voice supporting the identity, vitality and influence of our Province's arts and culture sector.

This sector has been affected by serious cutbacks in provincial funding in the past months. While we appreciate the need for fiscal restraints in response to an economic downturn and an escalating deficit, the cuts to arts funding have been disproportionately high. The future for arts and culture is made even bleaker with the projection of additional funding cuts totalling in excess of ninety percent.

However, most disturbing, is the potential and radical shift away from tax-based funding for the arts. Current information indicates that only gamblers will support our creative industry, as taxed-based funding is eliminated.

This is a dramatic shift in funding philosophy which suggests we, the residents of British Columbia, no longer recognize the values, contributions and impacts of arts and culture as individual responsibilities, as we do with other sectors such as education.

We are not asking Mayor and Council to pass this resolution for any self-serving reason. Instead, we believe arts and culture are integral to building and maintaining healthy communities, and every British Columbian should have access to cultural expressions.

The ramifications of the cuts will be far reaching: fewer artists will be able to tour to our region as presenting organizations scale back; and the activities of already fiscally-challenged community groups, including those that serve youth, the disadvantaged and the disabled, will diminish.

The residents of West Vancouver will be affected. We strongly encourage you to consider the full ramifications of the funding cuts and recognize that this issue that is not exclusively a Provincial matter.

By approving of resolution to restore the Provincial government's cuts to arts and culture investment, the District of West Vancouver will signal its own commitment to the arts, at the same time demonstrate strong leadership that will be recognized throughout British Columbia and the Canada.

Most sincerely,



Susanna Bell-Irving Gray
Chair, West Vancouver Arts Centre Trust

For the West Vancouver Arts Centre Trust Board of Directors and Kay Meek Centre staff:

Liz Byrd, past chair
David Toler, treasurer
Betsy Smith, secretary
Jan McCaffrey
Andrew Atkins

Paul Gravett, Kay Meek Centre executive director