

November 2, 2018

POSITION

This is the position of the Stuart/Martin County Chamber of Commerce in support of adequately funding of Arts & Culture in Florida.

Those of us involved in economic development, especially in relocating a business to our communities are constantly seeking pertinent reasons to share with a client in order to entice them to locate in our communities. The client's most pressing issues are top rated schools and outstanding healthcare and culture. Culture is consistently a key factor for businesses seeking to relocate. The Arts & Culture Industry returns \$9.00 for every \$1.00 spent to the local economy, an outstanding ROI! Florida is home to over 58,000 businesses employing 227,000 people and engages nearly 70 million residents and tourists annually in arts and cultural activities.

Florida's investment in the Division of Cultural Affairs Matching Grants has declined 93% in just five years, as the Florida economy has grown 35%. Investment by the state is critical to the sustainability of the arts community and the positive impact it has on our community and our economy.

The Stuart/Martin County Chamber of Commerce is proud to recognize the contributions the arts make to our community. It creates a destination for visitors, an economic engine for our region and a rich quality of life for residents.

We commend and supports the arts organizations that have come together to create "**Fund the A List**", the statewide campaign to petition the Florida Legislature to restore full funding of the matching grants vetted and approved by the Division of Cultural Affairs.

Joseph A. Catrambone
President/CEO
Stuart/Martin County Chamber