



ARTSFUND

January 25, 2008

Senator Ed Murray
215 John A. Cherberg Building
PO Box 40443
Olympia WA 98504-0600

Dear Senator Murray:

As heads of two of the largest private-sector funders of the arts in King County, we urge you to support SB 6638, which reallocates existing Lodging Tax funding for arts and heritage groups in King County.

King County is served by a renowned cultural life because of its three-legged stool of arts support – corporate, individual and public. Our two organizations raise funds from corporations and individuals. We use the funds to make grants to scores of nonprofit arts groups in the region. Through that work, we know how much arts groups also depend on public-sector funding from lodging taxes. Those funds have made an enormous and irreplaceable impact in creating the cultural life that serves this region so well.

King County is home to highly regarded performing and visual arts institutions, such as Seattle Repertory Theatre, ACT, Intiman Theatre, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle Symphony, Pacific Northwest Ballet and Seattle Opera. However, it's not just these large regional arts institutions that make King County unique. It's the wealth of community-based music, theatre and dance programs and local history museums that provide residents of the county opportunities to participate and enjoy cultural experiences in the communities in which they live. Revenues from lodging taxes support the work of the full range of these organizations.

Lodging taxes have been an important revenue source for non-profit cultural organizations in King County since 1990. SB 6638 extends the use of this existing tax for arts and heritage organizations into the future. On behalf of the more than 250 organizations that use this revenue source to help deliver their programs, we strongly encourage you to support this bill.

Sincerely,

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