



## **NASAA Statement on Cuts to the Arts in New Hampshire** June 30, 2025

The New Hampshire legislature recently passed a budget that enacts a radical reduction in state appropriations for the arts. NASAA calls on Granite State policymakers to restore these funds. [Research](#) shows that the arts help communities to weather tough economic times. By restoring a state investment in the arts, state lawmakers can fuel the resiliency of New Hampshire communities.

**The New Hampshire State Council on the Arts (NHSCA) strengthens New Hampshire communities through the arts.** NHSCA programs catalyze [economic growth](#), improve [education](#) outcomes, facilitate [good health](#) and preserve the state's cultural [heritage](#) for future generations. The agency's grants ensure [rural access](#) to the arts and leverage over \$50 million in community contributions and earned income for the state's cultural organizations.

For fiscal year 2026, however, the state legislature cut the agency's funding by 90%, electing to appropriate a mere \$150,000 in state general funds to NHSCA. **This amount falls far short of what's needed to fulfill the agency's mission.** It undercuts the state's national standing, making New Hampshire the state that invests the least in its arts agency. It also places the state's federal arts funds in jeopardy.

A new proposed plan to use tax credits to raise private contributions for NHSCA has not been feasibility-tested and could put the state in competition with local nonprofits. A healthy creative sector needs *both* public and private investments. Public dollars are an essential part of the equation because they reach regions that philanthropic dollars do not, especially [rural and low-income](#) communities.

**Defunding the arts in New Hampshire is both an anomaly and a missed opportunity. Legislatures in all 49 other states continue to support their arts councils because they know the arts offer a great [return on investment](#).** The arts help local businesses prosper. Kids do better in school. Residents are healthier, less isolated and more civically engaged. Communities strengthened by the arts place less of a drain on public resources, which is in the best interest of states over the long run.

This is a difficult chapter for the arts in New Hampshire, but it's not the end of the story. NASAA knows that New Hampshire citizens and civic leaders are determined to restore support for the arts in the Granite State. NASAA looks forward to that revival.