

# HB 6119

## AN ACT CONCERNING ARTS, CULTURE AND TOURISM FUNDING.

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Organizing Meeting, 2/5/21

*Note, this meeting is being recorded  
Also, please stay on mute and use the chat box*

# OUTCOMES

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1. **Knowledge** - share information about the context for this issue and the proposed legislation as it stands now
2. **Community** - develop a shared sense of understanding around the challenges and opportunities related to arts, culture, and tourism funding
3. **Advocacy** - articulate next steps for advocates in and outside the legislature

# Part 1: KNOWLEDGE

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- The current state of arts, culture, and tourism (ACT) funding
- The problem
- The opportunity
- The process

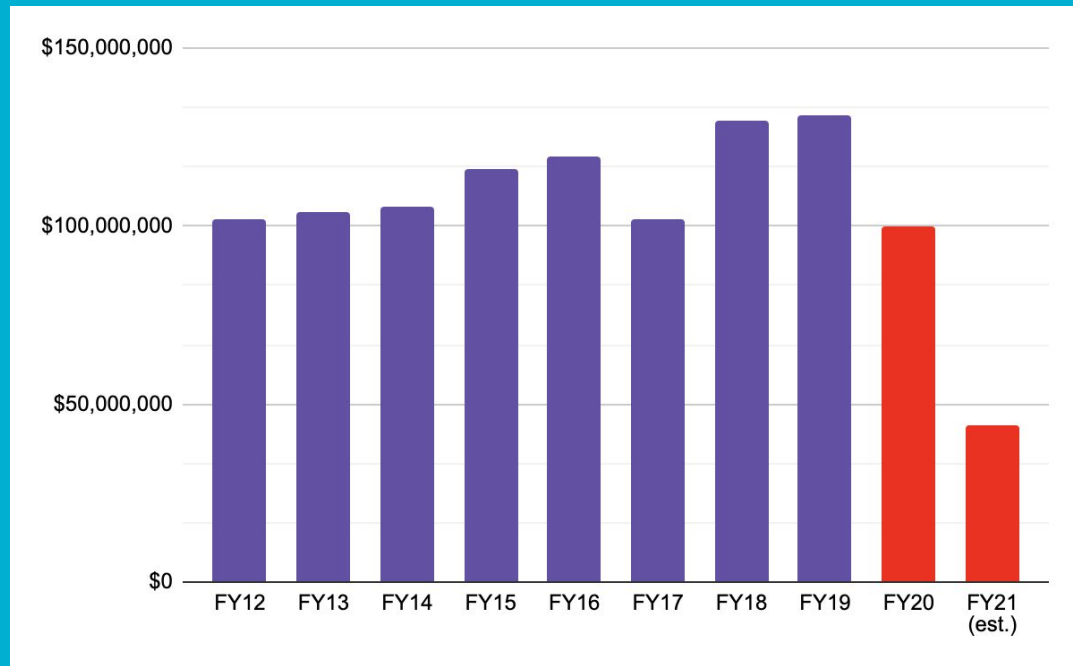
# Current State of ACT Funding

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- Guests at hotel, B+B, or Airbnb pay Hotel Occupancy Tax = average \$110M/yr
  - For many years, this went directly into the General Fund
- Recently, the state created Tourism Fund
  - Invest in the arts, culture, and tourism industries
  - A special, protected fund, separate from the General Fund
- The state deposits 10% of Hotel Occupancy Tax into the Tourism Fund annually
- The Tourism Fund has been working great = stable, \$13M/year
  - Arts + Culture (COA, CT Humanities, Line Items): \$5.5M/year
  - Tourism (CT Office of Tourism, Line Items): \$7.5M/year

# The Problem

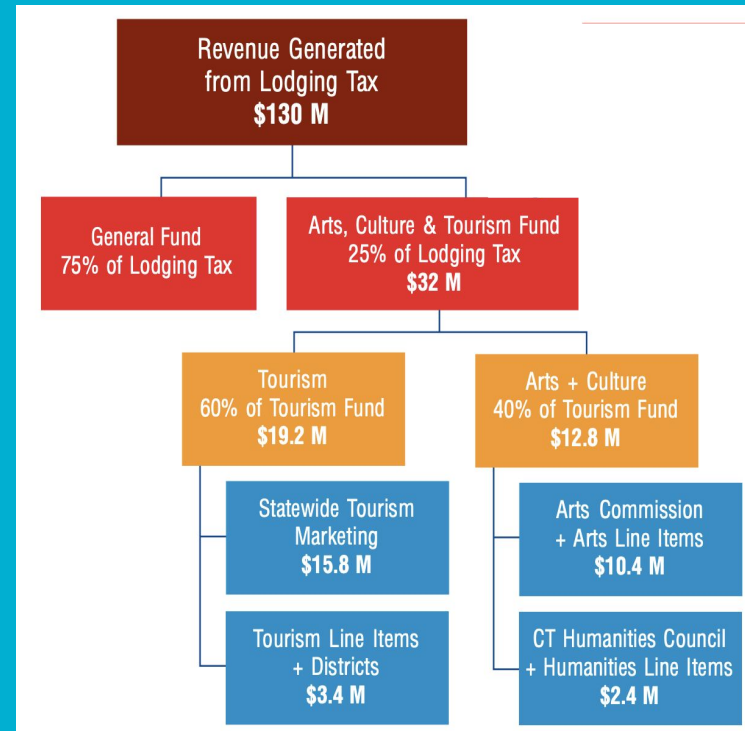
- Funding to arts and tourism has decreased substantially over the last decade
- COVID has decimated Hotel Occupancy tax
  - OPM estimates that the fund will be short \$14M by the end of this fiscal year in June



Hotel Occupancy Tax

# The Opportunity - HB 6119

- Change name to “Arts, Culture, and Tourism Fund”
- Codify 40% to arts and culture and 60% to tourism
  - This is the current but not legislated division
- Increase allocation of Hotel Occupancy tax to 25%
  - In a normal year, this would generate an additional \$20M to these industries:
    - \$13M for arts/culture
    - \$20M for tourism
  - With current projections for next year, this would help keep the overall fund in balance
  - When hotel occupancy tax rebounds and stabilizes, this will create sustainability



[Full Proposal](#)

# The Process

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- Both the Governor's transition committee for ACT and a Blue Ribbon Commission on Tourism in 2018 suggested these improvements
  - A similar bill (HB 7307) came before legislature in 2019, but didn't pass
- Governor's Proposed FY22-23 Budget: **Tuesday**
- Public hearing for HB 6119 with Commerce Committee: **Thursday at 10am**
  - If it's voted out of Commerce Committee, it will go to Finance Committee
  - Then, could go to the floor sometime in May

# Part 2: COMMUNITY

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What are your questions, comments, responses?

Please put questions in the chat and we will select some folks to share.

Further questions can be sent to [johnmichael.parker@cga.ct.gov](mailto:johnmichael.parker@cga.ct.gov)



# Part 3: ADVOCACY

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- Public Hearing, Thursday 2/11 @ 10 AM – Testify!
  - Write testimony (reference HB 6119) and send to [cetestimony@cga.ct.gov](mailto:cetestimony@cga.ct.gov)
  - Register to testify live, via Zoom, at [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_fJuX3lIKSOehz8YiRtSqwg](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_fJuX3lIKSOehz8YiRtSqwg) by Wednesday 2/10 at 3 PM
    - Schedule will be shared by 9 AM on 2/11 at <https://www.cga.ct.gov/ce/>
- Contact your legislators
  - Best to call! Writing is okay, too. Be personal and specific!
  - Look up your State Rep and Senator (where you live and vote) here: <https://cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/cgafindleg.asp>
- Contact [johnmichael.parker@cga.ct.gov](mailto:johnmichael.parker@cga.ct.gov) to be a part of the organizing team as we move forward