

**TESTIMONY  
OF  
BETH EDMONDS, CHAIR  
MAINE STATE CULTURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs  
And the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

Hearing Date: March 18, 2013

**An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds, and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2014 and June 30, 2015.**

Senators Hill and Millett, Representatives Rotundo and MacDonald, and Members of the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Education and Cultural Affairs, my name is Beth Edmonds and I am the Chair of the Maine State Cultural Affairs Council. I am here today to present testimony in support of those Departmental items presented in the Biennial Budget.

**PART A**

**NEW CENTURY PROGRAM FUND**

The **Part A** request for the Maine State Cultural Affairs Council may be found on page **EDU-12** of the Committee Copy.

***A. Introduction:***

The Maine State Cultural Affairs Council was established in 1991 to ensure a coordinated, integrated system of cultural resource programming and projects, and to ensure the support of cultural heritage institutions and activities of the State.

The Council membership includes the chair and vice-chair of the governing body of the following agencies and organizations: the Maine Arts Commission, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, the Maine Library Commission, the Maine State Museum Commission, the Maine Humanities Council, the Maine Historical Society, and the Maine State Archives. The chair of the Council is appointed by the Governor from among the members of the governing body of the member agencies. Ex-officio members include the agency directors and a liaison representative from the Office of the Governor.

As set forth in statute, the functions of the Council are to:

- Coordinate budget requests
- Provide a forum for interagency planning
- Serve as the principal liaison for distribution of agency-wide notices and instructions from other governmental administrative agencies
- Prepare a joint annual report and planning documents for the agencies
- Meet with the Maine State Film Commission and the State Law Library and others as appropriate to exchange information and coordinate statewide cultural planning
- Administer the New Century Community Program fund

***Program: New Century Community Program***

The cultural agencies coordinate services and expertise to provide matching grants to non-profit and community-based cultural organizations. Since each agency is using the Cultural Affairs Council as a forum for more effective and efficient program delivery and as a means to coordinate the services of each agency, funds available to the council are not diverted to administrative costs or staff.

The New Century Community Program has three broad program goals:

- Strengthen local cultural resources including community arts activities, humanities programs, and historic preservation activities
- Provide educational services beyond the reach of the standard K-12 educational system such as those offered through after school programs, cultural institutions, and non arts organizations
- Preserve both the state's material culture and its built environment through grants for preservation and restoration

New Century funding helps to enable organizations to bring their visions into reality by providing grant monies that will be matched by the grantee from other sources. Since its establishment by the Legislature in 1999, the New Century Community Program has been funded by both General Fund appropriations (FY 2000, \$3.2 million; FY 2001-02, \$500,000; FY 2002-03, \$530,000), and two general revenue bonds approved by the voters (2005, \$1 million; and 2007, \$2 million).

In the first appropriation, the cultural agencies distributed funding for direct programming, technical support and matching grants.

Following is a spending history of this program, which is administered by the member agencies and organizations of the Cultural Affairs Council. Funds are distributed equally among the agencies and organizations.

940 090425 <i>Spending History</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>Budget 2013</i>	<i>Budget 2014</i>	<i>Budget 2013</i>
General Fund	59,044	40,511	40,922	39,445	39,445	39,445
Other Funds	0	65,424	65,424	65,424	65,424	65,424
<b>Total Spending</b>						
<b>Staffing History (FTE)</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

***B. Budget Initiatives and Reductions.***

Not Applicable

***C. 2014-15 Budget***

The **Baseline Budget** request continues operations at the current level. The request for other special revenue allocation is \$65,424 in both FY14 and FY15. There are no new initiatives for this program.

This concludes my testimony for the Maine State Cultural Affairs Council, and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.