Tips for Meeting with Your Legislators – May 1, 2019

Citizens for the Arts in Pennsylvania has contacted your members of the General Assembly to prepare them for your visit. We shared our policy paper on arts funding for the FY 2019-20 budget with the members of the Arts Caucus and have prepared a leave behind piece with our policy asks. Additionally, we will have prepared a folder that you can also leave behind that includes statewide economic impact data and the official policy paper from Citizens for the Arts. Citizens for the Arts has compiled some tried and true tips to help you have a successful meeting.

Thanks for advocating!

Tips:

• Be on-time for your meeting
• You only have 15 minutes so be concise and brief in your remarks. Get to the point. You will lose a legislator’s interest if you meander.
• Be positive and friendly
• Leave behind Citizens’ yellow packet and any materials about your organization
• Ask your legislator to support a state budget for FY 2019-20 that includes $8.89 million for grants to the arts and $2 million for cultural and historical support through the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Follow up the ask with a personal story about how you/your organization/ community benefits from cultural funding from the state.
• Remember that your legislator may be unaware about funding for arts grants so be prepared to discuss this briefly (especially if your organization has received funding from the PCA). Legislators are interested in their constituents so your story is powerful!
• If you are asked questions and you don’t know the answers, DON’T MAKE IT UP! Tell them you will get back to them with an answer
• After the meeting, follow up with a letter or email thanking the legislator or staff for the time and offer to serve as a resource on issues concerning arts and culture in Pennsylvania.
• If your legislator cannot meet with you on May 1, considering dropping materials off at their office. Include a handwritten note inviting them for a visit when they are back in the district.