



The New York Public Library

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE AND
CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP
RELATIONS JOINTLY WITH SELECT COMMITTEE ON LIBRARIES**

May 28, 2009

Good afternoon, I am Paul Le Clerc, President and CEO of The New York Public Library ("NYPL"). Before I begin, I would like to thank Committee Chairmen David Weprin, Domenic Recchia and Vincent Gentile and the members of the committee for your great support of libraries in the past, and especially during these most challenging economic times.

Unfortunately, the proposed budget cut that the Library faces today is considerably worse than back in March. The Executive Budget includes an additional 4% reduction to the NYPL's funding, bringing the total FY 10 proposed budget cut to a staggering 21%, or \$28.2 million. If enacted, this cut would be greater than the cuts in the 70's when the City was bankrupt.

I would like to outline the devastating impact a cut of this magnitude would have on the essential services that the library provides to our communities. Our libraries are a valuable resource that is in danger. The cold, hard facts present a grim reversal of the wonderful progress that we have made over the last few years.

The NYPL continues to experience a system-wide surge in use:

- During these critical economic times, libraries are more important than ever:

- Everyday over 60,000 New Yorkers use the NYPL libraries (100,000 including Queens and Brooklyn):
 - Far more than the combined visits to ALL of New York's other cultural organizations;
- In the branch libraries visits are up approximately 11% system-wide from last year:
 - By the end of this fiscal year, we will attract 15.6 million visitors, the highest total in our history;
- Our research libraries have attracted nearly 2 million people at 4 locations during the first 10 months of FY09, up 20%;
- Combined, branch and research libraries, for the last 12 months attendance is 17.8 million, up 12%.
 - This total is more than double the attendance for both the Yankees and Mets home games during the entire 2008 baseball season;
- We have circulated 18.3 million items during the first 10 months of FY09, up 13% over last year;
- We are projecting a year end circulation of 22 million items:
 - The highest NYPL total ever;
 - In the Bronx, circulation is up an astonishing 26.7%;
- We offered 32,140 programs and classes with 680,000 attendees so far this year, up 26%;
- People are still coming to the NYPL in record numbers for job-search assistance:
 - Unemployed New Yorkers are particularly turning to their neighborhood libraries for support;

- The percentage of unemployed patrons visiting NYPL in February and March was three times higher (23.1%) than NYS Department of Labor's NYC February unemployment rate (8.4%)
- Attendance at job search related classes is up 82%;
 - The Library anticipates offering over 7,600 job-related programs this year;
 - In March and April alone, we offered job and technology training to 7,227 people;
 - We anticipate helping more than 45,000 people through free career coaching, job related programs and training classes in 2009;
- The Library has enhanced its partnership with the City's Workforce One Community Partners Program by establishing relationships with the City at library hubs and branches throughout the system;
- The Library has trained staff at all locations throughout the system that can assist users with job searching and career transition in order best to meet the escalating demand in this area. Every one of our 89 sites has staff that can help someone search and apply for jobs and write a resume.

The Mayor's FY10 Executive Budget proposes a sharp decline in support:

- Total proposed FY10 reduction for The New York Public Library is \$28.2 million. This is a 21% cut which includes reductions of \$20.9 million in

addition to the \$7.3 million FY09 City Council restoration not baselined in FY10;

- A 30%, or \$10.7 million reduction of capital funding in fiscal years 2010 – 2019;
- In addition to the Mayor’s proposed funding cuts, the NYPL is also facing the following reductions:
 - A cut of \$1.8 million, or approximately 9%, in State funding;
 - A reduction in private revenues of approximately \$20 million; and
 - An increase in non-reimbursed expenses of approximately \$7 million.

Impact of the proposed \$28.2 million reduction in City funding to the NYPL:

- Public service hours would be decimated – 52 hours average a week would be reduced by an average of 20 hours per week at all locations to an average of 32 hours across the system:
 - Most facilities would operate on a four- or five-day schedule;
 - In comparison, cities such as San Diego, Houston and even here in Yonkers anticipate that their branches will be open at least 6 days per week next year.
- The loss of at least 435 jobs through layoffs:
 - Approximately 19% of the NYPL workforce would be lost through layoffs;
 - These reductions would be major in both the branch and research libraries;
- A \$4.5 million (26%) reduction in Branch Library materials;
- A \$5.9 million (35%) reduction in Research materials;

- The greatest impact would be felt by the four most vulnerable groups served by the Library: children, seniors, immigrants and disadvantaged communities. Specific impacts include:
 - Nearly 5 million fewer library materials circulated;
 - 3.4 million fewer visits, with 680,000 fewer children and young people using the Library's safe and reliable spaces after school;
 - 230,000 fewer young people attending library programs;
 - 520,000 fewer computer sessions offered across the system;
 - 2,000 fewer programs for children, such as toddler programs, reading aloud and technology programs
 - 750 fewer visits to libraries by classes from neighborhood schools
 - Reduced access for seniors, who often use our libraries in the morning. Many of these morning hours would be cut, as they serve the fewest number of patrons.

Conclusion

Dramatic increases in attendance and circulation send a clear message – that libraries are more important than ever. The millions of people that will use one of our libraries this year in the Bronx, Staten Island and Manhattan would agree. As would the 2,300 dedicated employees that day in and day out help thousands of New Yorkers that come through our doors. We are in the midst of very challenging economic times. Libraries are equipped to help people survive this crisis.

In the past, this City Council has recognized how essential the services are that libraries provide to New Yorkers. You have championed funding of this City's

libraries and the people of New York are grateful. The FY10 proposed 21% budget cut would essentially cripple the libraries ability to deliver the services that the people of this city are demanding in record numbers. We again seek your support in keeping library doors open so that our communities can access this valuable resource.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to testify. We remain available to answer any questions you may have.



Bronx Borough

Visits

| Current Fiscal YTD Visits | Prior Fiscal YTD Visits | % Change |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|
| 4,074,680 | 3,589,401 | 13.5 % |

Circulation

| Current Fiscal YTD Circulation | Prior Fiscal YTD Circulation | % Change |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------|
| 3,708,569 | 2,916,774 | 27.1 % |



Manhattan Borough

Visits

| Current Fiscal YTD Visits | Prior Fiscal YTD Visits | % Change |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|
| 6,166,592 | 5,529,276 | 11.5 % |

Circulation

| Current Fiscal YTD Circulation | Prior Fiscal YTD Circulation | % Change |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------|
| 9,516,056 | 8,752,418 | 8.7% |



Staten Island Borough

Visits

| Current Fiscal YTD Visits | Prior Fiscal YTD Visits | % Change |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|
| 1,236,774 | 1,132,185 | 9.2 % |

Circulation

| Current Fiscal YTD Circulation | Prior Fiscal YTD Circulation | % Change |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------|
| 2,055,604 | 1,792,164 | 14.7% |



Statement by Thomas W. Galante
Chief Executive Officer, Queens Library

Select Committee on Libraries before the Committees on Finance, Cultural Affairs,
Libraries
and International Intergroup Relations

Fiscal 2010 Executive Budget

May 28, 2009

Good afternoon. I am Tom Galante, Chief Executive Officer of the Queens Library. I want to begin by thanking Chairmen David Weprin, Domenic Recchia and Vincent Gentile and all of the members of the City Council for your incredible ongoing support, especially in these challenging economic times. More than ever we seek to protect the critical services that serve as a lifeline to those most in need and I know that you also share our sentiments.

Today is doubly significant as it is our last attempt to testify on behalf of the over 2 million people who live in Queens and who need their neighborhood libraries to remain open. In addition, today is Library Day at City Hall for Queens Library advocates. Joining us in the chamber are almost two hundred Queens' residents who came to personally tell their respective councilmembers how critical their library is to them and their communities. These are only a handful of our steadfast advocates whose stories of

resilience and hope I am privileged to share with you at hearings such as these. Their persistence and strength continues to encourage me. And I hope that seeing their faces and hearing their stories will only strengthen your resolve to restore these severe proposed cuts.

It is no secret that we are in the fight of our lives with pending budget cuts that threaten to drastically cut service hours, particularly eliminating weekend service at every community library, and possibly reducing our staff by over 300 positions -- a staggering 31%. I know that no one in this room wants this to happen and I want each of you to know that we are fighting harder and smarter than ever for full budget restoration. The Executive Budget calls for funding to Queens Library to be reduced by \$17 million for FY '10 and this is on top of over \$5 million in reductions already sustained. It is unthinkable that the greatest City in the world would see public library service brought to its knees but that is exactly what we are facing. It is equally tragic that the Saturday and weekend library service that we all fought so hard to bring back is in jeopardy of being eliminated once again. But the truth is that unless we see significant restorations to our budget this year, we could see some of the lowest service levels on record with some libraries open only two or three days per week. We must not let this happen.

Despite the cuts we have already sustained, looming budget reductions and some anxiety about the future; we continue to go about the business of enriching lives while refusing to sacrifice our exceptional customer service which is the reason that we have been able to maintain our position as the highest circulating public library in the United

States. We continue to offer top quality programming, unparalleled services, all delivered by the finest staff one could wish for. We have already commenced activities and we are busily preparing for our kick-off event of the enormously popular Summer Reading program in June. But to continue our life enhancing work, our doors must be open.

An arduous task lay before us; yet we remain focused and determined to achieve the goal set before us – and that is to continue to serve the people of Queens, particularly those hit hardest by the current economic crisis. And with the unemployment rate rising to 8.9%, we know that we need to succeed, that so many depend on us for so much that is good in their lives.

In financially difficult times such as these, it is understandable that library usage has dramatically increased. Circulation has continued to go up and with programs and services also reporting an increase in attendance by 4.29%, this would be the worst possible time to scale back our hours and service! A reduction of hours and services does not instill hope or equip people looking for a brighter tomorrow? Queens Library doesn't have all the answers, but we are one of the solutions!

Each and every day, we are reminded by our customers of how essential our 62 libraries have become to the sustainability of communities and families. People enter our doors with hope in their pockets and we ask for nothing in return. Due to the economic downturn, our trained and willing staff assist more and more customers seeking to

navigate various job websites while offering invaluable job placement tips and skills building workshops. Here our staff have become job counselors, often providing a loving touch to a very human reality. In addition, avid readers search our shelves for the latest novel releases, college students are able to reduce their book budget by borrowing textbooks and families keep up traditional movie nights by checking out their favorite movie at the library.

Our Board of Trustees along with our Senior Management staff has worked feverishly to come up with a budget strategy and advocacy plan. We have also employed the assistance of our Friends groups as well our over 15 million customers, some of whom have joined us here today. Our petition drive and post card campaigns have already gathered over 80,000 signatures in favor of budget restoration. And on Monday, May 18th, almost 300 Queens' residents joined us on the steps of our Flushing community library to stand up for libraries, passionately shouting at the top of their lungs, "Save Our Libraries!" One parent who was at the library with her two young children came over and expressed how much she and her children use the library; "I'm here every day with my kids," she said as she and her children meandered their way to the steps to join the rest of the supporters. "You can't close this library, you just can't."

I know I am preaching to the choir, but let there be no mistake—public library service is critical service that must be preserved. People need us and we must continue to be there for them. We will fight every day to save Queens Library this year so that when

this economy turns around we will be well positioned to expand library service to where it truly needs to be—open seven days a week.

Thank you.

Elizabeth Condon May 28, 2009

Hi everyone, my name is Elizabeth Condon and I would like to thank you all for the opportunity to speak to you today. The first thing I would like to talk about is the funding cuts of the Library Learning Centers in Brooklyn. If you cut the funds from the Learning Centers we won't have a place to learn how to read or write.

When I was growing up I had a hard time reading the signs on the subway and when I went to the supermarket I had a hard time reading the labels.

When I was 18 years old I got pregnant with my son. After giving birth I was alone for 4 years, raising my son by myself. Then, at age 25, I met my husband. My life became much easier after that.

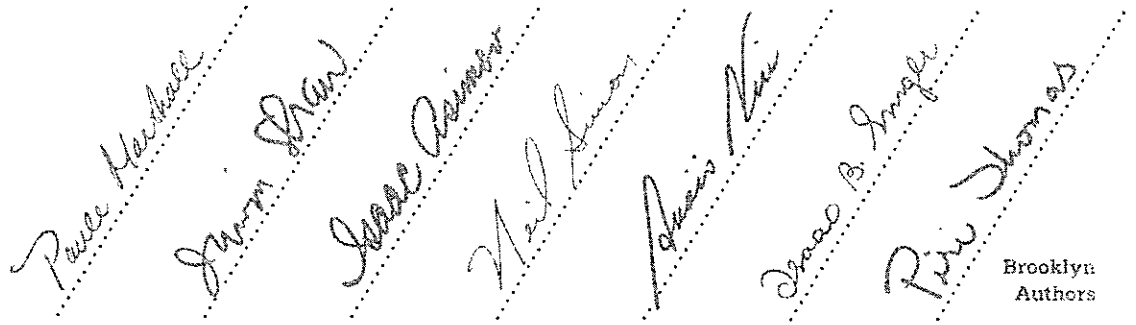
My husband helped me raise my son. Even though I didn't know how to read or write I managed to help my son graduate from college. I am proud of him. I moved back to Brooklyn and I found this amazing program here at the Coney Island Learning Center.

It took me 42 years to find this program. This program has helped me learn how to read and write and have confidence.

When I first started here I didn't know how to read or write at all. I have been coming to this program for 2 years and now I am in the advanced class. Nick is my tutor and he is great. I have seen other students in my class show progress too. That shows you that this program works.

Please help us get the funds that we need for this program. If you close the Library Learning Centers in Brooklyn people like me won't have a place to come and learn how to read or write.

Once again, please help us, and thank you.



**NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND INTERNATIONAL
INTERGROUP RELATIONS**

COMMITTEE ON LIBRARIES

HEARING ON THE EXECUTIVE BUDGET

**CITY HALL
May 28, 2009**

TESTIMONY OF BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Good afternoon. I am Dionne Mack-Harvin, Executive Director of Brooklyn Public Library (BPL). On behalf of the library's Board of Trustees and staff, I would like to thank Committee Chairmen David Weprin, Domenic Recchia and Vincent Gentile for inviting BPL to testify today concerning the Executive Budget and the devastating impact it would potentially have on BPL's operations, and our ability to continue to deliver life skills, and life-changing services, to the people of Brooklyn.

BPL and Brooklyn's 2.5 million residents are thankful for the outstanding support that the Council has demonstrated to the library over the past several years. This support has allowed us to keep library doors open longer—46 hours per week at each of our 58 neighborhood libraries—and provide more hours of service than at any time since we started keeping records.

Regrettably, the Executive Budget puts all of these service gains, and so much more, at risk.

My testimony today will give an overview of the proposed budget and offer a look at the grim impact reduced library funding would have on BPL's 1100 full-time and 500 part-time employees, days and hours of service, and on the resources and services we provide. But more importantly, this afternoon you will have the opportunity to hear, first hand, how Brooklyn Public Library makes a difference in the life of Ms. Elizabeth Condon, an adult literacy student at our Coney Island Learning Center.

Ms. Condon is here to represent the tens of thousands of library customers who won't be able to borrow a book, research a term paper, access a computer or attend a literacy class should the funding proposed in the Executive Budget be adopted for the 2010 fiscal year.

The numbers are disturbing, and admittedly, very frightening for the future of library service in Brooklyn and for the future we create for the borough's millions of residents. In FY2010, **BPL faces a potential funding reduction of 21%, or \$17.5 million, for operations when compared to the FY09 Adopted Budget.** If we endure the full \$17.5 million cut, we would be forced to:

- **Eliminate as many as 272 positions** through a combination of layoffs and attrition—that's almost one out of every four full-time jobs. In addition, we would have to cut our part-time workforce by half, eliminating 250 more jobs.
- **Reduce library service by nearly half to 25 hours per week.** We would only be able to offer six-day service at our Central Library and soon-to-reopen Kings Highway Library, which prior to renovation was our second highest circulating location. Our 58 other libraries would open from 1:00pm to 6:00pm to ensure that children have a safe place to go after school and complete homework, but with a severely reduced level of staffing, we would not be able to offer convenient morning, late night or weekend hours. Against the mission of a public library, we would have to deny service to thousands of Brooklynites who use their libraries during these popular hours, including senior citizens, parents who home-school their

children, customers who work 9 to 5 jobs, teachers making classroom visits, and many more Brooklynites who support our public institution as tax-paying citizens.

- **Cut our materials budget by 40%** and buy far fewer books than we otherwise would have. We expect that a cut of this magnitude to our book budget will create holes in our collection that will take years to fill. This cut will also endanger the physical condition of our collection, as we would have less money to replace heavily borrowed books like test prep guides that prepare people for educational opportunities and employment, and board books that introduce babies to literacy and the world of learning.

During this extremely difficult budget season, I have been heartened by the support that Brooklynites show their library. BPL supporters have packed the Council Chamber today, and through our Support Our Shelves campaign, hundreds of Brooklynites, along with library trustees and our partners at Independence Community Foundation, Con Edison and Citi Foundation, have donated more than \$280,000 for neighborhood library needs. In addition, thousands of Brooklynites have demonstrated their support for the library and their opposition to the cuts we face by calling, writing letters, signing petitions and sending emails to you and your colleagues in the Council and to the Mayor. We know that this support makes a difference, and for that we are truly grateful.

I am honored to be joined by one of these library supporters today, Ms. Elizabeth Condon.

Ms. Condon, a constituent of Councilman Recchia, is not only a library advocate, she is a student at BPL's Coney Island Learning Center located at 1901 Mermaid Avenue. Please allow Ms. Condon to share *her* testimony.

[Ms. Condon speaks]

Thank you, Ms. Condon for sharing your story and speaking on behalf of BPL customers and literacy students. Your testimony speaks loudly just how much libraries improve and transform lives.

As we approach the 2010 fiscal year, the stakes could not be higher. A *New York Times* article from the 1930s Great Depression reports that book lines at libraries were just as long as the bread lines, and we're seeing this same surge in library use during today's economic crisis, which makes the proposed 21% cut to BPL's Operating Budget that more daunting.

In addition to slashed operating funds, BPL has endured a 30% cut to our Capital Budget this year, impacting our ability to maintain safe, clean and up-to-date libraries. This reduction in capital funding follows a 20% deferral imposed last year.

Brooklynites, need and deserve much more than 25 hours of library service per week. They need and deserve bookshelves stocked with multiple copies of the latest bestsellers and important non-fiction titles. They need access to computers and the Internet that allow them to search for jobs, secure housing, apply for social assistance, and stay connected with friends and family. And they need and deserve robust programming to satisfy their intellectual curiosity and educational goals.

I know the Council and the City face many tough choices as the Executive Budget proposes cuts to many critical programs and initiatives, but libraries are not a luxury—they are a necessity of life.

At a time when Brooklynites need us now more than ever, please be assured that should the Adopted Budget include funding above the amount provided for in the Executive Budget, BPL's commitment is to provide Brooklynites the highest level of service possible.

Thank you Speaker Quinn, committee chairmen, and the entire City Council for your steadfast support of libraries. I hope you will continue to stand as champions for BPL and libraries across the rest of the City.

I would be happy to answer any questions.



FOR THE RECORD

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Dear Councilmembers:

I want to thank Chairman Recchia, and members of the Council for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of The Public Theater. The Public is a proud member of the Cultural Institutions Group and greatly appreciates the support that the Council and Mayor provide to us.

The Public Theater serves over **300,000 visitors annually**. Each summer our signature program, Shakespeare in the Park, attracts over 100,000 visitors who enjoy our productions completely free. Our outdoor summer productions in Central Park draw tourists from all over the world who come to see first rate actors perform at the first outdoor Shakespeare Festival in the country. Our associated education programs are attended by **1,500 NYC school children** from underserved areas each year. This summer, we will bring our Shakespeare Lab program to all of the Boroughs!

Last summer was the first time in eight years that we did not receive \$100,000 from the Council to help subsidize the cost of free tickets to Shakespeare in the Park. Despite the success of last summer, this season we do not anticipate being able to provide more than nine weeks of Free Shakespeare to New York in 2009 due to budget cuts. We are doing five weeks of *Twelfth Night* starring Anne Hathaway and four weeks of *The Bacchae*, with music by Philip Glass.

Notwithstanding the exciting summer we are anticipating, we are experiencing decreases in contributed income on all fronts. We have already undertaken several cost cutting measures in FY09 and we are now down to bone. We have cut department budgets by 20%; **laid off four staff members; cut one mainstage show**, instituted a hiring freeze, so we are not replacing two key staff members; and the full time production staff is now working overtime to run the shows, rather than hiring a run crew. If the Executive Budgets passes as is, we will have to **lay off an additional 10 staff members, many of which live in Brooklyn and Queens. These are primarily low income and minority filled positions, which serve our operations, production and security needs**. Without these staff members, we will have to cut 1 mainstage show, all festivals (currently three per year), our \$10 Public LAB series, and all new play development work. These cuts will spiral into additional losses in contributed and earned income and will affect The Public for years to come. We will lose partners and members and without new plays in the works, our programming will suffer in the future.

The City of New York will also suffer **lost tax revenues of \$25,000**. Local restaurants and small businesses that depend on our patrons will lose revenue as a result of our decreased programming and staff.

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Our overall expense funding from the Council and Mayor from **FY08 to FY10 is down 50%, or nearly \$500,000**. In addition to the Council cut of \$100,000 to Shakespeare in the Park, we also lost \$100,000 in supplemental support toward Rush Tics, a program which provide \$20 tickets for all performances. The Public cannot weather additional cuts from the City and continue to provide the level of desired service to New York City.

I understand that under the current economic climate, painful cuts must be made throughout the city that will be felt by all. However, I ask that the Council and Mayor recognize that the CIG's have already experienced severe cuts over the last two years and that you consider a reasonable **restoration of the PEG in FY 10 and the \$10 million Job Creation and Retention Package**.

Sincerely,

Andrew D. Hamingson
Executive Director

TESTIMONY of EILEEN MULLER
PRESIDENT of LOCAL 1482, BROOKLYN LIBRARY GUILD
May 28, 2009

**BEFORE THE COMMITTEES ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES
AND INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS**

Good afternoon. I am Eileen Muller, president of D.C. 37's Local 1482, the Brooklyn Library Guild, representing over 1000 employees at the Brooklyn Public Library. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to communicate with you today.

I have had the privilege of speaking to you many times about the effect the Library's budget has had on both the public and the employees. In the past, you have responded by supporting restoration of funds to the Library.

I feel that my speeches sometimes sound like an echo – our problems remain the same in the face of diminishing financial resources. You have always been supportive in recognizing the importance of the public libraries to the people of New York.

We all understand that we are dealing with a very different time today than in the past. The only thing that has not altered is the library patron who comes to the library as if nothing has changed. That person, knowing first hand the effects of the country's economic situation, needs the services of the library more today than ever before.

Today, I just want to let you know how the projected cut in service hours will affect our users. Right now, Brooklyn Public Library is planning to open 45 branches from 1 to 6 on Monday through Friday. Although a few other branches will probably be open evening hours, our public will have to travel further to get to them. Only a few branches will be open on Saturday. Sunday hours are gone.

The public who will no longer be served will be the school groups coming to the Library for class visits. The pre-school children whose parents and babysitters bring them in before the older school children arrive. The elderly seeking a quiet place to read the newspaper before the volume goes up with the arrival of the teens. The unemployed person doing job searches on our computers. The person working a late schedule at his job. The person working a normal work day – most libraries will not be open in the evening.

We don't know the other affects. Will the pre-GED class right outside my office continue to serve adults whose kids are in school? Parents can't attend once children need them when school lets out. Will programs continue?

I believe the Library has made the choice of the hours of service to provide a place for children after school, when they need access to books and a safe place to go. This is a valid reason, and I cannot quarrel with it. But our society is not just school-age children, and we need to remember that others have needs too.

We've all heard how Barack Obama got his first job by using library resources. There's no telling which school child using our public libraries will be the next Obama or Sotomayer but we need to keep our libraries open for them, and for those who are not yet or no longer in school.

The library users of the city of New York need your support today more than ever in the past.



Queens Library Guild Local 1321

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I am here with my other colleagues to note the importance of keeping libraries whole. With the purposed budget cuts to the library systems, we will see reduction in hours of service, reduction in staff, reduction in library materials and a reduction of the many things that a library offers. Now more than ever, libraries have become an important community center were people come for computer use, job related and other educational information, entertainment and enjoyment of many free activities. The loss of staff is especially sad as they are the future of the library bringing enthusiasm, knowledge, and helpfulness to the public. Last, when the economics gets better and appropriate money is given, it would not go to further building libraries to the fullest but in restoring what was lost during this period.

Testimony of Local 1930 President Carol Thomas

To the City Council Cultural Affairs, Libraries & International Intergroup

Intergroup Relations

May 28, 2009

Chair – Council Member Domenic M. Recchia, Jr.

Chair (Joint Select Committee on Libraries) Council Member Vincent Gentile

Chairman Recchia and distinguished Committee members, I am Carol Thomas, President of the New York Public Guild Local 1930, DC 37 AFSCME representing 1650 front line library employees in the Bronx, Staten Island, and Manhattan. For all New Yorkers, free access to information is more than a quality of life issue – it is an absolute necessity in the world of today. Libraries are valued by their users and have been the pride of elected officials in the City of New York as they should be.

I am sure that everyone here today wants to maintain high quality public Library services that prepare our children to enter a workforce that each day requires greater skills and education. As we know, for many urban and low- income families, public libraries provide the only access to computers and the internet, which is crucial in today's job market. The value of a safe haven for children and young adults cannot be underestimated.

It is unconscionable that the Mayor's Executive Budget is calling for BUDGET CUTS for FY 2010 in the midst of an economic downturn. This proposed budget includes a 21%, or \$28.2 million, cut in the operating funding for the New York Public Library. These cuts translates into a drastic reduction of hours, books and other services and MASSIVE LAYOFFS of 415 staff members. The layoffs are the

opposite of what President Obama is trying to do in Washington – which is to stimulate the economy by creating and protecting jobs. Please take a look at the remarkable statistics of the circulation and attendance that the New York Public Library has provided. These figures cannot be overlooked. They prove the high quality of service that is provided by the staff. And that libraries are crucial today more than ever, especially when we face a deep depression and people are relying more and more on library resources for job searches.

We cannot allow the proposed budget to undo all of your hard work, support and dedication in getting libraries to the point that they are today. Don't let this economic disaster be a disaster for the New York Public Library. Maintaining and keeping all libraries open six and seven days a week, with no LAYOFFS, must be a PRIORITY.

*Testimony to City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries &
International Intergroup Relations*

Randall Bourscheidt

Thursday, May 28, 2009

Thank you, Chairman Recchia, for this opportunity to speak about the proposed budget for the Department of Cultural Affairs.

We in the cultural community are suffering the same economic pressures as every other sector during this terrible recession. Like businesses, government, and nonprofit organizations active in other fields, we are concerned about maintaining our public service and at the same time about protecting the job security of the thousands of people employed directly or indirectly in the arts.

We know that the task of planning a responsible budget which maintains City services is a great challenge to the City Council and the Mayor. We understand that equity and fairness must apply to all decisions you make about the allocation of limited City funds. But we also want to work with you and the Mayor to consider the positive role that cultural organizations play in the economy, understanding that City funding to the arts does not just provide cultural services to the public but acts as an investment in the health of our communities and the city's economy.

It is in the public interest to keep our cultural institutions strong. We hope that reductions will be planned so as to limit the impact. The rule of thumb, that every City dollar invested in the arts is repaid in City taxes, works both ways. Reduce the investment, reduce the tax income. I recognize there is no easy solution to this quandary, but I hope we can look to the City's response to an earlier fiscal crisis, our near-bankruptcy in the mid-1970s, for a model of how to mitigate the unavoidable cuts in public funding. At that time, the City took advantage of the federal CETA program to allocate funds to cultural groups to enable them to protect the jobs of—or rehire—hundreds of workers who would otherwise have been laid off. There is no CETA program in 2009, but there is great interest in Washington in maintaining employment.

The cultural community is eager to work with our friends in City government to take advantage of any jobs programs which might be available, or to encourage Congress to create new jobs programs which might serve our industry. After all, the arts are as natural to the Big Apple as apple pie; they are one of our most important home industries.

The facts are well-known: The arts contribute \$21 billion in economic activity to the city. They generate 160,000 jobs and \$900 million in City taxes. The nonprofit sector alone has an economic impact of almost \$6 billion and generates 40,000 jobs. It pays \$170 million in taxes to the City—more than the Cultural Affairs budget you are considering today. Although all City services are important, and some are vital to our health and safety and the future of our young people, few areas of City expenditures generate a return on investment as great as the DCA budget.

The recession has already weakened our industry. By last December, 80 percent of cultural groups we surveyed indicated that they had cut their budgets and over half had laid off workers. This is a pattern which affects all cultural organizations, from the greatest international museums and performing arts centers to community-based groups in every borough of the city.

The administration has already shown great imagination in finding new ways of supporting the nonprofit sector without significant allocations of public funds through the Mayor's innovative Nonprofit Initiatives. The cultural community is ready to do what it can to work with the City government, not only to survive intact but to find new ways to serve the public.

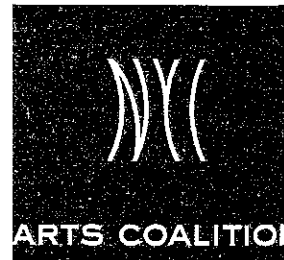
The public wants this. Although we have not yet completed a survey of the entire field to assess attendance, there is a lot of anecdotal evidence that attendance has risen at many cultural venues. This is a strong vote by the people that they want to have access to the civil and encouraging experience offered by our museums and theaters and gardens and zoos.

The Alliance is making a contribution to this by getting information to the public about discounts for seniors and students, free days for all, and opportunities to become a member or volunteer at cultural institutions. We're also using our new NYC ARTS information system to promote efforts to reach the public, from the Bronx Culture Trolley to the River to River Festival, the Queens Art Express Festival and Heart of Brooklyn.

Finally, I would like to comment on two other aspects of the City budget which bear directly on the health of the arts industry and the city's overall economy. First, the public library system remains one of our strongest cultural and educational assets and I hope the Council will look favorably on its need for public support. Use of the libraries is dramatically up, not only because they are free to all but because they are a connecting link to every art form and to the world—including the world of employment. A robust library system also supports the cultural institutions because it educates people to the potential of all art forms.

Second, marketing the city to tourists and business leaders is vital to our survival. I hope the Council will continue to work with the Mayor to provide adequate funding to NYC & Company. I feel strongly about this as an arts advocate because culture is acknowledged to be one of New York's strongest attractions for visitors, and because tourism directly benefits cultural organizations. In our last study, we found that arts-motivated visitors generated \$5.5 billion in economic impact and 55,000 jobs. At a moment when Wall Street and many other industries are suffering, tourism remains strong. We expect 44 million visitors in 2009. Let's keep the cultural institutions strong to welcome those visitors and to serve all New Yorkers.

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. These are extraordinary times with pressures and demands on the City budget unlike what has been seen in over a decade.

Given that reality, and the fact that I know the City Council is deeply aware of the needs in the cultural sector and has shown itself repeatedly to be committed to meeting those needs, the question this year is not only what restoration can be achieved, but how can you deal equitably with the needs in front of you.

I want to provide you with a snapshot of the employment – or lack thereof – for a small segment of the mid-sized arts groups surveyed in late April. Based on a sample of 61 groups with budgets between \$100,000 and \$1 million, representing all boroughs, and all disciplines except museums none of which had a budget under the \$1 million in our records, here are the results. Since last summer,

67% had either laid off workers or not filled a vacant position

17% had converted full time jobs to part time

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16% are using a combination of furloughs, pay cuts or have an Executive Director, General Manager or Artistic Director who has foregone salary during the past few months.

All expect to have further layoffs and/or furloughs or pay cuts over the next four months.

I chose to focus on a specific segment of the cultural sector as that sector represents about 65% of the groups in the City. Translating this survey into specific numbers of jobs lost that that mid-sized universe is not easily done because of the change from full time to part time and the use of pay cuts and/or furloughs. A cautious projection is probably around 1100 jobs already lost in the mid-sized groups.

If one combines this type of data with what we know of the CIGs losses, and the larger arts groups that I did not include, I don't think it would be out of line to say that the cultural sector has probably lost 8-9% of its job base over the past 10 months, with more on the way.

That translates into fewer public service programs, fewer earned income programs and a lot of people struggling.

Both the proposed Program cuts and the proposed level of CIG operating cash are truly a disaster. I think many of the Program groups are a little less horrified by their proposed cuts simply because they had so little money from the City until two years ago. That does not mean they are not hurting; they are and will be even more. Many also simply no longer have sufficient staff to deal with advocacy.

The CIGs are quite legitimately extremely alarmed by the proposed cash funding to them. I was quite frankly stunned to see the extent to which their operating cash had been impacted.

I am aware that the energy subsidy for the CIGs has increased, and that increase has, from the City's viewpoint, made it necessary to decrease the cash operating support to the CIGs. I deeply disagree.

The City must keep its 1975 promise to the CIGs to fully fund the city workers it placed on their payrolls at that time. The CIGs were given no choice in that matter. Removing those employees from the City payrolls and putting them on the CIG payrolls allowed the City to tell the bonding agencies that were they were cutting City payrolls. Anyone who lived through that near bankruptcy experience for the City at that time can understand the sleight of hand, but the four OMB employees who presented

this option to the CIGs did not give them any choice. It was not a negotiation. The City must either fully pay for all the cost of those employees or allow the CIGs to properly manage their organizations with the necessary layoffs, and/or salary adjustments. It should stop the charade, which has gotten worse every year for at least a decade.

Energy costs are a separate issue and the CIGs should be allowed to keep any funds in that category that they can save by energy conservation. Those funds are allocated to "Culture" in the City budget. They should spent in that way and not revert to the City's general funds as they do now.

In closing, thank you for your past support. I hope that somehow you can perform a miracle and reject all these propose cuts, but if not, please – at a minimum – restore equally to all groups AND deal with the issue of the energy funding staying within DCA if not fully used by the CIGs.

Norma P. Munn
New York City Arts Coalition
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May 28, 2009

TESTIMONY

by

**Virginia P. Louloudes, Executive Director
Alliance of Resident Theaters/New York
(A.R.T./New York)**

to

The City Council Committee

on

Libraries, Cultural Affairs, and Intergroup, International Relations

Thursday, May 28, 2009

Good afternoon, my name is Ginny Loulouides, and I am the Executive Director of the Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York (A.R.T./New York), the leadership organization for New York City's 350 not-for-profit theatres. I am grateful to have the chance to come before you, to thank you personally for the Council's past support of A.R.T./New York and our member theatres, and your historic restorations to the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs budget.

At a time when many Americans are doing their best to cope with the severe and sudden economic downturn it is more important than ever that the stories of those who are persevering be told.

The not-for-profit community has always been led and staffed by people fueled by serving the missions of their organizations. And I am continually amazed by the level of devotion and leadership that exceeds anything I've experienced in my 30 years of working in the field.

A.R.T./New York just completed a research study on how our theatres are coping with the fiscal crisis. If the members who participated in this study represent A.R.T./New York's full membership, I would have to say that our artistic and managing directors demonstrate heroic leadership, and set a tremendous example not only for their staff and boards but for the public at large.

At a recent focus group, Michael Robertson, Managing Director of the Lark Theatre Company, shared this story:

"One of our playwrights, who writes stunningly poetic work (the next August Wilson, we think), called the office to say he was throwing in the towel. He said, 'It's hopeless. Nobody is going to produce an epic play with 16 characters.'"

Michael went on to say that he had read this writer's first act and it was brilliant. He has convinced this writer to finish his piece, and is giving him hope that this play will move from the page to the stage.

The impact of Michael's story cannot be overstated. Our living playwrights are the conscience of our culture. In 1991, Tony Kushner's epic work ***Angels in America*** brought the topic of AIDS more fully into the national dialogue. How fortunate we are that Tony Kushner wasn't only reading the

financial pages during the last recession; for he might never have written this final stage direction, which ends with an angel, crashing through the ceiling of a bedroom of a man who is suffering from AIDS.

At a time when we need a new generation of playwrights to help us come to terms with the world of the 21st century, our playwrights should not be placing limits on their imagination! And a world where artists are afraid to dream, results in a world where children's own dreams are stunted, and the so-called American Dream risks becoming a thing of the past.

That is why I am asking you to restore the \$18.4 million cut to the budget of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the second largest funder of general operating support to theatres in what is largely regarded as the Theatre Capital of the World!

Last year, thanks to an additional \$5 million in City Council member Items, DCA funded a little over \$7 million to 233 theatres. Since the Council and DCA have transformed the grant giving to a peer review process, theatres have gained substantially. Most companies saw an increase in the size of their initial grants. In fact, this increase helped our theatres weather the early years of the recession, marked by the significant reduction of support from the corporate sector.

Since the beginning of the current financial crisis theatres have lost millions of dollars in earned and contributed income. MCC Theatre noted that 6 of their 16 Board Members are unemployed; and two other companies each had a board member who "lost everything" to Bernie Madoff.

Many of our large and mid-sized companies (with budgets above \$750,000) have had to lay off staff; put staff on furloughs or cut back on the number of productions, and/or on the size of the casts in their plays. Fewer employees mean fewer income tax dollars for the City; and fewer plays will result in fewer visits to restaurants, parking garages, and taxi cab rides.

A healthy theatre industry is a necessity for New York City. Our theatres provide jobs that teach such lifelong skills as teamwork, time management, negotiation, and most important, problem solving. They contribute to positive street activity at night and on the weekends; jobs in construction to the dozens of theatres renovating or building new spaces, and free and

discount tickets to our public schools students and our seniors – thereby encouraging their own creativity and giving them permission to dream.

For years, New York City has been dominated by the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate industries (FIRE). The first two are facing historic challenges and the real estate industry is adapting to the new realities. However, the ICE Industries (Innovation, Creativity and Education) offer hope for the future. **A thriving arts community is the difference between a New York City in crisis, and a New York City that is broadening its financial base.**

I know that it is in times like these when people need the theatre most! I also know that in times like these New York's City Council, and in particular, this Committee, is under tremendous pressure from worthy interest groups throughout the City. All I ask is that you not only consider our contributions to New York City's economy and spiritual health, but you think of those who have stopped daring to dream. Think of our children, and our families who struggle to live here so that their children can have a better life. Many of these children can find a meaningful life working in the theatre.

The arts have the greatest record in on-time service delivery of any industry in the world; and yet, because we are not listed on the Stock Exchange, our stock is sorely under-rated. Your support will help to raise our stock, and ensure that the hopes of New York City's artists, craftsmen, administrators, and children will remain alive. **Please, restore DCA's funding, and the thousands of jobs that depend upon these dollars.**

Thank you.

Good afternoon. I am Henryk J. Behnke, Director of Marketing & External Affairs, representing the Staten Island Museum on behalf of its President & CEO, Elizabeth Egbert, and, more importantly, the **73,000 people** who attended our programs, - that's an increase of 11% compared to last year.

In this economic climate, people are looking for inexpensive yet stimulating activities for themselves and their families. With little funds left for vacations, many residents opt for "staycations." Likewise, school classes do not travel far to explore their heritage, the arts and environment and instead visit first-class cultural institutions in their home boroughs.

This is where the members of the Cultural Institutions Group (CIG) fill an important and concrete need. Thanks to support from you – NYC Council Members, Administration and Borough Presidents, this public-private partnership enables us to offer **affordable recreational activities** for families and valuable **educational programs to school children** - 35,000 last year alone at the Staten Island Museum - and many thousands more at the Staten Island Children's Museum, the Staten Island Zoo, Historic Richmond Town, and Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden.

Located just two blocks from the Staten Island Ferry, the Staten Island Museum serves some of the 2 million tourists that ride the ferry as well as long-time residents, recent immigrants and their children. They all come to celebrate their diverse heritage, learn about Staten Island's natural environment, experience the life of the Island's first inhabitants, the Lenape and to be inspired by local artists. As a major attraction in the St. George neighborhood, the Staten Island Museum also **contributes to the local economy** since visitors frequent local shops and restaurants.

This Spring, the Staten Island Museum will join our friends at Snug Harbor as we open our History Archives & Library in a historic building right behind the new museum we are renovating with City funds. The new museum, which will add the critical mass to make Snug Harbor a day-trip destination, is scheduled to open late in 2010. We are grateful for the City's support of this project, which we are pleased to report has helped us leverages private funds as well.

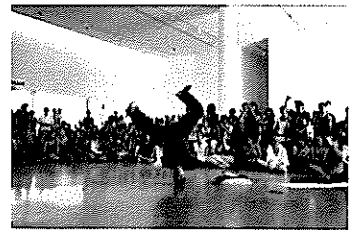
In light of our expansion, reductions to the Department of Cultural Affairs budget are especially harmful. Even before the proposed FY 2010 cuts, **we were forced to close four of 19 full-time positions** and are now an even leaner organization as we focus on our core mission. We join our CIG colleagues in urging the City Council to at least maintain the current funding of the Department Cultural Affairs. Further cuts will result in more layoffs and reduced hours, at a time when the need for our inspiring programs is at an all-time high.

The Bronx Museum of the Arts
FY2010 Executive Budget Hearing, Cultural Affairs
Thursday, May 28, 2009

Services

The Bronx Museum of the Arts serves an economically-challenged and underserved local community. As a cultural anchor in the Bronx and the sole modern and contemporary art museum in the Borough, the Museum provides vitally important cultural and educational enrichment programs to a wide range of diverse audiences while drawing city-wide visitors, artists, and art patrons.

- We annually serve 20,000 children, students, community residents, artists, and general museum visitors who participate in school-day, after-school, and weekend programs.
- 5,000 are comprised of Bronx K-12 schools, teens, and resident families.
- Approximately 95% of the Museum's education attendance is under the age of 21.
- 55% of education audiences surveyed are from the Bronx Empowerment Zone.



This past year, we have seen increased visitation as more families are staying close to home.

- To date, attendance **has increased by 3% from last year.**
- And we welcomed a **record-breaking 1,688** visitors at a free Open House and Street Fair celebration in September 2008.



Overall, the Bronx Museum and its CIG colleagues provide a wide array of art, history, science, and nature enrichment programs to 20 million multi-generational audiences each year. At the Bronx Museum, attendance is largely driven by free or subsidized programs to families, students, and schools in need.

FY2009 - Loss of Public and Private Support

As a mid-sized institution, the Bronx Museum receives significant support through the Department of Cultural Affairs which supports the salaries of nearly 100% of the Museum's security and operations staff.

- During this economic decline, public support of the Museum was slashed by **\$198,600**
 - \$171,200 from New York City, including the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) and Department of Youth and Community Services (DYCD).
 - \$27,400 from New York State.
- And, The New York Times Company Foundation, one of our most valued and long-standing funders, will eliminate its grants program next year. Unfortunately, we cannot turn to the private sector to fill the loss of public support. They too are facing enormous fiscal challenges.



FY2009 - Impact of Declining Support & Recession

With these cuts, the Museum was forced to retrench and reduce its workforce this year. Measures included:

- Instituting a hiring freeze through FY2010 – Senior Curator, Plant Manager, and Maintenance positions are vacant and will not be filled
- Cutting 3 part-time security positions and laying-off 4 full-time union security positions this month – all are Bronx residents.
- Having all staff operate on a 4 day/week schedule in order to save 20% in payroll.

The Museum is now operating with a thin, bare-bones staff of 24.

Existing staff are absorbing the responsibilities for multiple positions, causing strenuous conditions.

And those who lost their jobs are without a stable source of income and health benefits for their families during a very difficult and challenging economic crisis.

In addition, the community has seen a reduction in vital services we provide to local audiences.

- We closed on Mondays – There are fewer days to serve visiting Bronx public schools and community residents.
- Canceled Summer Education Programs – We eliminated our summer **Saturday Teen Art Classes** for Bronx teens who receive training in our new Media Lab.
- And reduced the availability of fee waivers and subsidies to schools – We can only accommodate schools who can cover baseline expenses, such a fees for teaching-artists and art materials for our **Group Visits Programs**.

FY10 CIG Funding

- The proposed 7.4% cut to CIGs in FY2010 will mean a loss of \$311,000 for the Bronx Museum – a 42% reduction from FY2008's level. This is huge for the Bronx Museum.
- If the proposed cuts go forward, the Museum will be forced to reduce its FY2010 operating budget by 50%, continue furloughs and cut more staff, limit the frequency of free programming, and may eliminate its free hours of operation. These actions will unfairly impact the thousands of community residents who have come to rely on the Bronx Museum when programs are needed most.

In order to provide the vital jobs, cultural and educational services CIGs provide to New York City residents and visitors, we urge the City to:

1. **Restore the projected 25% cut to the CIG**
2. **Restore \$10 million in Council initiatives to support job retention**



May 28, 2009
Cultural Affairs and Finance Committees - Testimony

MEMO

Good afternoon Chairman Weprin, Chairman Recchia, and distinguished committee members of the Finance and Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations Committee

My name is Jonathan Stafford. I am a Principal Dancer with the New York City Ballet (NYCB) and I have been employed fulltime by the company for the past 10 years.

I am one of 100 dancers who are fulltime employees of the company, though next year our numbers will be down by 11 dancers. Collectively, we work 165 performances every year in New York City alone for 365,000 audience members. That is 23 weeks of seven performances a week between Nov and June.

To put that into perspective, we perform as many times as our beloved Mets and Yankees play in the regular season. Plus we go out on tour when we're not dancing in New York. And just like New York sports teams are among the top teams in the country, NYCB is one of the premiere places to dance and to see dance in the country. Some would even say the world. In fact I was just speaking to a gentleman the other night after one of our performances who lives and works in London and flies over here on a regular basis just to see the New York City Ballet perform. I have come across numerous people like this during my career who are proud to say that they schedule long trips to NYC just to come see the ballet and to experience NY City's diverse Arts culture.

New York City Ballet also employs 63 musicians who play for every performance. Live music is especially important for a dance company to put on a truly exciting and dynamic performance. I have danced to taped music before and I always feel that something is missing because the energy that is created by a live orchestra really is what drives your performance.

It takes 18 costume stitchers, more than 10 wardrobe people and backstage dressers, over 25 stagehands, plus 8 technical personnel, 45 ushers and box office personnel, and numbers of rehearsal pianists and ballet masters, working 6 days a week behind the scenes to make our performances possible.

Just like professional athletes, our work demands a lot of our bodies. At the NYCB we have physical therapists, a company doctor and other health professionals who help take care of us.

My years at New York City Ballet have honestly been a dream come true. I came from a small town and wasn't really sure if I wanted to be a professional dancer until I saw NYCB perform live for the first time. I can still remember the name of the ballet and the

dancers that were performing it 13 years later. I left the theater so inspired to be a ballet dancer and I knew that I did not want to dance anywhere else other than NYCB. There was just a special buzz in the air and an excitement watching these great dancers in this great company dancing their hearts out on stage. My experience has been even more special since my younger sister, Abi, also joined New York City Ballet. Now my parents get to come up to the big city and see their kids out there on that stage and it has been really special to share that with them.

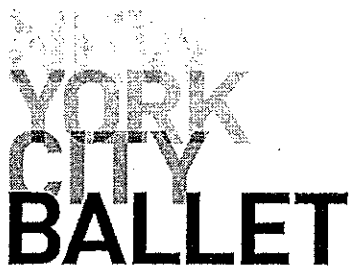
I truly believe that NYCB is very important to the local community. Patrons that come into the city to see one of our shows spend money at the restaurants and shops around Lincoln Center as well as buying train tickets or paying to park their cars in local garages.

We have always made a point of reaching out to the local children in the city. New York City Ballet performs a few extra shows a year strictly for children from the local school system. Attendance is free and during the 2008 and 2009 school year, 5,000 students from grades K – 12 and from all five boroughs were able to attend. I have actually sat in the audience during a couple of these school shows and it is really fun to hear the gasps from the kids after an impressive turn or jump and to hear the oohs and ahhs when they see the girls in their beautiful costumes. It actually sounds a bit like a rock concert at the end of the show with all of the children screaming and clapping.

The company also puts on several productions a year – like *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker* and *Coppelia* – that include local children who get to perform alongside all of us, which is really exciting for them.

As I said before, being a principal dancer with the New York City Ballet is a dream come true and the highest honor in my profession. The opportunity to dance with other world-class athletes and artists is a thrill and performing in front of thousands of enthusiastic audience members is a wonderful affirmation of our work. I can't tell you how many times I have been walking out of our theater after a show and seen everyone from a little kid to a grown man dancing down the sidewalk with a big smile on their face and humming the music that they just heard. I have heard some of our patrons say that the only bright spot of their week during these tough times is to enjoy a good night at the ballet. New York City Ballet is a symbol of the strength of New York's arts and culture to the country and the world. We, along with our fellow Cultural Institutions, drive the creative economy by providing entertainment, employment, and education to New York citizens and by attracting people from all over the world.

At New York City Ballet we understand there are many competing needs in difficult budget times. But the high quality and consistency of New York City Ballet's work and how it represents our home here in New York remains constant. Restoring support for our efforts will have a residual and long-term effect on making possible the high standard we all expect of our long-standing cultural institutions.



May 28, 2009
Cultural Affairs Hearing

MEMO

Good afternoon Chairman Weprin, Chairman Recchia, and distinguished committee members of the Finance and Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations Committee

My name is Catherine LeClair and I am the Director of Foundation and Government Relations for New York City Ballet. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to describe to you the impact that cuts to City funding will have on our Company.

New York City Ballet Is an Innovator and Icon

New York City Ballet was founded in 1948 by Russian immigrant George Balanchine along with New York native Lincoln Kirstein, who recognized Balanchine's genius and invited him here to New York City to realize his dream. George Balanchine said, "I wanted to come to America to create an American company. New York is the only place in the world where we could have built this company."

Balanchine is a great example of the American Dream come true and of the possibilities that New York represents to the world. As you may know, Balanchine invented a distinctly American style of ballet that has since influenced classical and modern dance around the world.

Over the 63 years since New York City Ballet was founded, the Company – by virtue of its artistic innovation – has come to symbolize to our country and to the world New York City's cultural leadership.

New York City Ballet Is a Good Investment

New York City Ballet along with its institutional partners, New York City Opera and the New York State Theater – which is now the David H. Koch Theater – are members of the Cultural Institution Group for New York City. The City's long commitment to investing in our 33 organizations has paid the City and its citizens back exponentially.

With your investment, our organizations have increasingly provided more programs while employing greater numbers of New Yorkers than ever before, bringing together more people to City land and buildings through capital projects enhancing city property and visitor experience. With your investment, we have been able to leverage significant private interest and funding. National and international tourists see our institutions as much as they view Broadway, Wall Street, the Mets or the Yankees. In short, the members of the Cultural Institution Group have been extraordinary stewards and ambassadors of your trust, money and mission.

Constituents and Employees

- New York City Ballet employs 373 people, of whom 276 live in New York City.
- Millions of people have attended our performances since the Company's founding.
- Annually, over 365,000 people enjoy our performances in New York and nearly 100,000 see the Company in Saratoga Springs and on tour around the world.
- Nearly 7,000, k-12 New York City school students participate in our yearly programming.

Leveraging Public / Private Partnerships

As you know, New York City Ballet has recently embarked on a \$200 million capital project with the David H. Koch Theater and our co-tenant and neighbor New York City Opera. In

addition to the City's commitment of \$25 million in capital funds, we have leveraged a \$100 million gift from a private donor, David. H. Koch.

This generosity and loyalty to our work, exemplifies the kind of successful public/private partnership that is pivotal to maintain New York City's robust economy. A healthy and flourishing creative sector, while providing personal enjoyment and entertainment creates jobs, enhances our community, and uses local services and supplies.

New York City Ballet in Need

Unfortunately, in the current economic crisis, New York City Ballet is in danger of having to scale back just at a time when New York needs our economic activity the most. Our income from public, private, corporate, and institutional sources plus tickets sales revenues has dropped dramatically this year (15-20%) forcing us to trim our 2009 operations by \$1.5 million. Plus:

- 11 dancers' contracts will not be renewed at the end of the season, the first time in the history of our Company that we have had to lay off dancers,
- 4 other dancers positions are open and will not be filled,
- seven administrative staff positions are open that will go unfilled,
- senior management took a 10% pay cut on March 1,
- general staff salaries are being reduced by 5% beginning July 1, and
- our 63 musicians have agreed to wage freezes through August 2010.

The dollar value of layoffs and unfilled positions is: \$1,108,600. While we have cut artistic staff and reduced administrative payroll, we have not yet had to cut back our programs. We continue to offer inexpensive tickets to our productions – some as low as \$15 for adults and \$12 for students. We continue to engage 7,000 New York City students with programming. We continue to perform seven times a week, 22 weeks every year at Lincoln Center. In short, we continue to do more with less, honoring our commitment to our community and our role as a member of the cultural fabric of New York City. But this will not be possible if we must endure further revenue cuts in FY10.

Our Request

We understand that the current national and local fiscal crisis requires difficult budgetary decision-making. We believe the FY 2010 Executive Budget unduly burdens a sector of the City's economy that is essential to economic recovery and to our City's unique identity. The Mayor's budget proposes an \$18 million reduction in operating support. As you, our city councilors reflect on the tough decisions ahead of you, we urge you to keep the members of the Cultural Institution Group a priority. We help build our communities, we have the infrastructure and systems to put people to work and deliver programs immediately, and we provide services and experiences that will strengthen and repair our social fabric.

The Cultural Institution Group has a proven track record of economic stimulus in New York City. Please, enable us to be part of the solution to our shared economic challenges.

On behalf of New York City Ballet, and my fellow members of the Cultural Institution Group, I **respectfully request that the New York City Council work to restore lost operating support of \$18 million and make a \$10 million investment for the creation and retention of jobs within New York City' cultural sector.**

Thank you for your continued partnership with New York City Ballet and members of the Cultural Institution Group.

Cultural Institutions Group

CIG Testimony before the New York City Council Finance Committee jointly with the Committee on Cultural Affairs,
Libraries & International Intergroup Relations
May 28, 2009

Good afternoon, Chairman Recchia and Chairman Weprin, and members of both the committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries & International and Intergroup Relations and the Finance Committee. I am Arnold Lehman, Director of the Brooklyn Museum, and Chair of the Cultural Institutions Group. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today in response to the Proposed Executive Expense Budget for Fiscal Year 2010. I would also like to thank Councilmember Recchia and Councilmember Weprin and the members of these two committees for your strong leadership and support over many years for the 33 extraordinary cultural institutions represented by the Cultural Institutions Group and the critical contribution each and every CIG makes to their surrounding community and to the city at-large.

I am testifying today on behalf of these 33 cultural institutions that together compose the CIG - and which are charged with and provide exceptional stewardship for many of the most important New York City owned properties throughout the five boroughs. Among the CIGs are many of our city's cultural and neighborhood cornerstones and, proudly, a large number of the most respected art, science, and performing institutions in the world.

Our incredibly diverse programs and services attract 20 million New York residents, families, schoolchildren, teachers and international tourists each year. We provide them with a better understanding of the world, our nation, and our neighborhoods through outstanding visual and performing arts, science and natural history, our cultural heritage, and our shared experience. Together, we share an ongoing and increasing obligation to the 2.3 million schoolchildren we serve each year; to the nearly 11,000 people we employ; and to the communities across this city where we are increasingly economic engines and neighborhood stabilizers.

According to a 2005 study by the Alliance for the Arts the non-profit culture sector contributes \$5.8 billion to the city's economy and arts motivated visitors contributed another \$5.4 billion. The same study found that the cultural sector contributed \$904 million to the city's revenue via personal taxes, sales and user taxes, and business taxes.ⁱ

All of us know that the current national and local fiscal challenge requires extremely difficult budgetary decision-making. We believe, however, that the FY 2010 Executive Budget unduly burdens a sector of the City's economy - arts and culture - that is essential to economic recovery. The Mayor's budget proposes an \$18.1 million reduction in CIG operating support. These reductions are in addition to the combined loss of funding in FY 2008 and FY 2009 of nearly and additional \$15 million, which included council initiatives, support for increased security, and new needs funding that together totaled \$10.4 million.

We are deeply concerned about the horrific impact these proposed cuts will have on the CIG's ability to provide essential services to the students, seniors, and communities that depend on us - now more than ever before. In light of the reductions outlined above, institutions have been left with no choice but to cancel exhibitions, performances, and programming, close galleries, reduce open hours, increase entrance fees, reduce salaries, and furlough or lay-off hundreds, if not well over one thousand employees this year and next. CIG member institutions have reported that in FY 2009 they have already had to reduce their workforce by nearly 500 positions. Furloughs have already affected hundreds more of CIG staff, and there may be as many as one thousand additional staff members that will be furloughed in the new fiscal year. Each of these jobs represents a person that not only provided essential high quality services at their institution, but who contributes to the local economy and tax base. Cultural institutions not only serve and help people, they *are* people.

We urge the Council to fiscally stabilize the city's cultural institutions by adopting the following initiatives:

- 1) A restoration of the 25% cut to CIG operating support (\$18 million);
- 2) Restoration of former Council initiatives to maintain current and rehire CIG jobs (\$10 million).

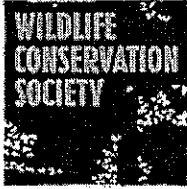
A significant investment by the City Council and this Committee, in particular, is necessary to preserve jobs - and the countless programs they support - in the cultural sector. One of the two critical elements that we - the CIG - propose is that the Council, in partnership with the Administration, makes a \$10 million investment to create and retain jobs within the cultural sector. These funds were cut in FY 2009, and are critical to the survival of the 33 members of the Cultural Institutions Group, as well as the artists, scientists, educators, workers of all descriptions, and community businesses that rely on a robust arts community for survival. Having employed 11,000 staff members for many years, I believe it is clear that the CIG's have the expertise and infrastructure to expedite and manage the development and implementation of a job retention and job creation initiative. We are confident that, with support from the City Council and from the Administration, the Cultural Institutions Group can be part of an effective, ongoing solution to the fiscal crisis, and help restore and maintain New York City's legacy as the cultural capital of the world as well as the financial capital.

This investment translates into significant economic returns— contributing to jobs, economic development, and the vital support of the tourism industry. I believe that many of you already know our contributions as the CIG to the economy and tax base: that we return some \$8 in economic activity for every dollar of City support; that we employ New Yorkers from every single Council district; that several CIG's are the largest employers in their communities. Indeed, the members of the Cultural Institutions Group is even more integral to the economic and social health and welfare of our city now more than ever in the past. A recent economic impact study conducted by Harvard Business School for El Museo del Barrio, located in East Harlem, found that El Museo's overall economic impact during the FY 2005 – 2008 period was in excess of \$120 million, which includes El Museo's spending on direct and indirect taxes in New York City, contributions to the local economy made by visitors through lodging, shopping, and purchasing other goods and services. During the same period of time, the City's contribution to El Museo was \$2.3 million. No clearer statement of the value of this investment by the City can be made.

Cultural institutions are a key element of New York City's exceptional quality of life. We form the core of the cultural infrastructure that makes NYC the most exciting urban center in the world. We believe that we are critical to a long-term strategy for economic revitalization. Last week, at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Metropolitan Museum of Art American Wing, First Lady Michelle Obama talked about the essential nature of the arts and culture: "The arts are not just a nice thing to have or to do if there is free time or if one can afford it. Rather, paintings and poetry, music and fashion, design and dialogue, they all define who we are as a people and provide an account of our history for the next generation." She continued - "...the intersection of creativity and commerce is about more than economic stimulus, it's also about who we are as people." We need to "ensure that all children have access to great works of art at museumsto have access to great poets and musicians ... to arts educationfor children ...to see a way to create a future for themselves in the arts community, be it as a hobby or as a profession."

In essence, the First Lady's wish for the future is what the Cultural institutions Group - with the Council's ongoing commitment and support - provide now. We look forward to working with you and exploring options that will maintain and preserve the integrity of the City's cultural institutions for this generation, and many more to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your past support. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.



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Testimony of John F. Calvelli
Executive Vice President for Public Affairs
Wildlife Conservation Society
Before the New York City Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International
Intergroup Relations
May 28, 2009

Good Afternoon. Thank you Chairman Domenic Recchia and the members of the committee for the opportunity to speak before you today about the tremendous economic importance of NYC's 34 Cultural Institutions Group (CIG) and their economic impact on the city and local communities.

The CIG is comprised of 34 NYC cultural institutions that include botanical gardens, museums, performance arts centers, zoos and aquariums. They and the city are linked through formal partnership agreements which have guaranteed a measure of public investment to the institutions. These institutions reside on city land and in city buildings. In return, the cultural organizations have produced a diverse array of public services and amassed world-famous collections ranging from rare art and specimens to endangered plants and animals.

The quantitative impact on NYC by the Cultural Institutions Group is impressive; add to that what can't be quantified and the CIG is a great investment to the city. For example, WCS alone generated more than **\$414 million** in economic activity in New York City for 2008, creating jobs, purchasing goods and pumping money into the cash registers of local businesses, many in underserved areas.

Specific positive economic impacts of the Bronx Zoo and New York Aquarium include:

- More than 4 million visitors come to our facilities each year. The Bronx Zoo and New York Aquarium are both located in underserved areas.
- WCS offers free Wednesday admission to all at the Bronx Zoo and free Friday afternoons at the New York Aquarium.
- We are one of the largest youth employers in the Bronx. (400 at Zoo; 100 at AQ)
- In FY 08, we hired 800 seasonal employees at the Bronx Zoo, including students, retirees, and people on public assistance.

Much of the impact upon our local area though cannot be measured by these quantitative measures alone. The Cultural Institutions Group enhances and benefits the local community through its provision of education and teacher training, its entertainment and

recreation facilities and its community outreach programs. These work to improve the quality of life and attractiveness of New York City to visitors and residents, particularly among under-served groups. The Bronx Zoo and New York Aquarium served 567,765 school and camp groups and provided free access and community programs to 592,184 individuals in FY 2008. WCS and all the city's cultural institutions are what make New York City great. For every dollar invested in WCS, alone, by the city, we raise another \$9 that helps bring all these services to the city.

WCS, a member of the city's Cultural Institutions Group (CIG), is working with its fellow members in asking City Hall to fully restore their funding in FY 2010 of \$18 million as well as support a job creation and retention program to keep our communities economically strong. We have been and continue to serve as an engine for economic activity in every borough.

If I can leave you with one thought I hope you will agree that funding culture is good for business and good for the people of New York.

Thank you.

My name is Juana Flores and I am here today to discuss how the cutting funding to the Brooklyn Public Library system will affect my community. The Brooklyn Public Library is a valuable community resource. It number of resources are too numerous to list here, so I thought that I would describe some of my personal experiences and observations.

I volunteer at the Brooklyn Public Library where I conduct a story time session for children from birth to five years old. I am also a library patron as I use the library as a source for reading material for me and my family. I would like to discuss my observations as a volunteer and a patron on what parents think about how the library is used. I hope you will factor my observations into your library funding decision.

I have had many conversations with the parents that attend my story time. Every one of them is grateful for the program and gets a tremendous amount of joy of attending the story time session with their children. Many of the families that attend have only one parent working, so the story time program provides a welcomed relief as a free source of kid-friendly entertainment. This will be especially important in the summer when kids are not in school. In addition, the Reading is Fundamental (RIF) program has always been a great source free books, which helps BPL promote the importance of early reading.

In addition, many children do not have a safe place to go after school because their parents work. As a result, their parents or guardians direct their children to go to the library where their children will be in a safe environment and be able to get help with their school assignments. Libraries have become a safe haven for some children who do not have anywhere else to go after school. About a month ago, I came across one such child. I met her outside of a branch that closed early because the heating system went down. I asked her why she did not go home and she told me that her mother works and did not give her the keys to their home.

During the day, I noticed how the usage among adults has increased. Some people told me that they were recently laid off and they use the library resources to aide them as they search for work. The library offers training in computer literacy, G.E.D. programs, and many other valuable job searching resources.

My own experience with the library began with me bringing my daughter there for story time. With the help of the librarians, I learned how to teach my daughter pre-literacy skills. I found value in the story time program because it helped my daughter learn the alphabet, numbers, colors, shapes, and the names of animals. I decided to volunteer about a year ago when I noticed that the cutbacks were leaving some libraries understaffed and unable to conduct story time. The librarians were very supportive and encouraged me to further develop the story time program. One library in particular, Ms.

Christine Dille, mentored me and encouraged me to pursue a graduate's degree in library science. With her support, I enrolled in the Graduate School of Library and Information Studies at Queens College.

As you can see, the librarians of the Brooklyn Public Library are a very valuable asset to the community and I would urge you to reconsider cutting funding.