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Resolution in support of funding for Louisiana's statewide and decentralized arts programs from the General Fund

WHEREAS, Tourism is one of **Louisiana's top industries** generating **\$9.3 billion** in annual spending for Louisiana businesses; and

WHEREAS, the tourism industry is the **7th highest employer** in the state and **one out of ten** Louisiana jobs depend on tourism; and

WHEREAS, direct spending by resident and international travelers in Louisiana averages **\$24.7 million** a day; and

WHEREAS, these visitor generated tax revenues **save each individual household** in the state approximately **\$510** in annual taxes; and

WHEREAS, in 1990, the legislator dedicated 0.003 percent of the state sales tax to the Louisiana Promotion District Fund; and

WHEREAS, these district funds have been legally allocated and continue to be used by the Louisiana Office of Tourism to advertised and promote our message to visitors outside of our state, and as a result creates the economic impact from tourism sited above; and

WHEREAS, in these tough economic times, just as businesses and individuals are tightening their belts and looking to place their dollars in those programs and projects that have a strong **return-on-investment**, governmental bodies are having to do the same; and

WHEREAS, tourism spending has a remarkable return-on-investment, returning approximately **\$17 in tax revenue for every dollar invested** in tourism advertising, therefore providing government with funding for many other needed services, such as healthcare and education; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 executive budget allocates **\$1.5 million of these dedicated tourism marketing dollars** to fund the decentralized arts grants, and

WHEREAS, the arts are an important part of Louisiana's tourism product and also enhance the quality of life for our citizens and visitors alike; **it is our understanding that these dedicated Promotion District Funds must legally be spent on marketing Louisiana as a travel destination**; and

WHEREAS, the tourism industry believes these arts programs are worthwhile, they also reduce the State Office of Tourism's ability to attract new visitors through advertising; and

WHEREAS, together, the statewide and decentralized arts grant programs benefit 8.5 million locals and visitors; creates more than 22,000 jobs across the state; and provides equitable grassroots arts funding to all 64 parishes and

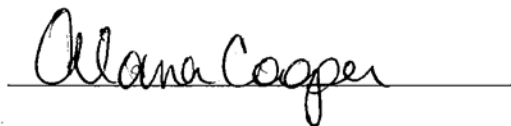
WHEREAS, in 2009, the statewide arts grants program operated with a budget of \$2.4 million in state general funds. The executive budget is now recommending \$959,466 for the statewide arts grants program. This, and a combination of budget cuts over the past two years, results in a 60 percent budget cut to a program that generates income and strengthens Louisiana's tourism product; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that although arts are important to our state, the decentralized arts grants are not directly advertising or marketing the state of Louisiana to visitors, therefore, the Louisiana Travel Promotion Association Board of Directors, on behalf of their 800 plus tourism professional members **asks for the \$1.5 million in arts funding to be removed from the 2011 tourism budget;** and therefore, be it further

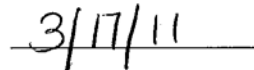
RESOLVED, **the arts be funded by the state's general fund at the levels it deserves - \$2 million in state arts grants and \$2 million in decentralized arts funding;** and, therefore, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Secretary transmit copies of this resolution to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Commissioner of Administration, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, the State Treasurer, the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, and various appropriate media.

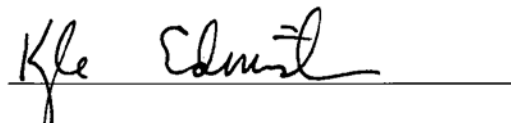
Signed:



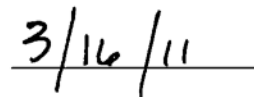
Alana Cooper, Chairman of the Board of Directors
Louisiana Travel Promotion Association



Date



Kyle Edmiston, Secretary of the Board of Directors
Louisiana Travel Promotion Association



Date