



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**JEAN-DANIEL NOLAND**  
Chair

**ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.**  
District Manager

April 2, 2009

The Honorable David A. Paterson  
State Capitol  
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Paterson,

Manhattan Community Board 4 overwhelmingly objects to the debilitating (100%) 2009 second round funding cuts to the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) that occurred in the fall of 2008. As Manhattan District 4 is home to over 40% of all small to mid-sized theatres in New York City[1], we ask that you restore funding to those theatres whose 2009 applications were being considered in that round of NYSCA funding. This NYSCA cut blind sided scores of theatres in our area that were placed in financial peril due solely to their arbitrary position in the application cycle.

We further object to your proposed \$7 million cut to NYSCA's 2010 budget. This amount represents a very small 'savings' for the State, but a substantial loss for the performing arts. Given theatre's proven ability to leverage government contributions by a 5 to 1 ratio, this \$7 million savings could mean as much as a \$35 million loss to the State in arts economic activity[2].

With New York State's budget currently slated to be \$131.8 billion, the restoration of NYSCA's share represents a negligible addition to it. What in the big picture would be considered a "rounding error" could literally mean survival for a crucial component of the City's arts infrastructure.

Theaters provide jobs, support neighborhood economies, and enhance New York's competitive edge. New York City's status as a culture center attracts both the most ambitious and accomplished artists & professionals, and as a result, the tourist and other revenue streams that follow. In addition, small to mid-size theatres provide valuable research and development for the entertainment industry; acting as entry points for actors, choreographers, musicians, designers, et al . Nowhere is that more evident than in Community District 4, which has had a major role in the development of theatre in New York City for generations.

At the recent and unprecedented public forum for theatre professionals (hosted by Community Boards 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5), the displacement of small to mid sized theatres was of crucial concern. Restoring NYSCA funding will have an immediate and positive impact on the stability and survival of many of our small to mid-sized theaters and the economic resilience of our neighborhoods.

We urge you, please, to restore the NYSCA funds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jd', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Jean-Daniel Noland  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board 4

[1] New York Innovative Theater Foundation 2008

[2] Alliance for the Arts 2005

cc.:

State Majority Leader Malcolm Smith  
New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver  
New York State Senator Tom Duane  
New York State Senator Liz Krueger  
New York State Senator Daniel Squadron  
New York Assembly Member Daniel O'Donnell  
New York Assembly Member Richard Gottfried  
Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer  
Speaker of the New York City Council Christine Quinn  
New York City Council Member Gale Brewer  
New York City Council Member Alan Gerson  
New York City Council Member Daniel Garoonick  
New York State Assembly Member Daniel O'Donnell  
New York State Assembly Member Deborah Glick  
New York Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal