**From:**

**NAME \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**POSTCODE\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**To: Gordon Lyons MLA**

Room 354

Parliament Buildings

Ballymiscaw

Stormont

Belfast

BT4 3XX

Or by email at private.office@communities-ni.gov.uk

Dear Minister

Will you listen to 12,500 members of the community? Will you listen to MLAs who support investment in the arts across the political parties? Will you listen to the local councillors who voted in their councils to support investment in the arts?

I am a member of the Northern Ireland community. I am a voter and I am a supporter of the arts.

I know that investing in the arts:

* supports creative industries, and promoting the arts, language and cultural sectors
* revitalises town and city centres
* encourages diversity and participation in society and promoting social inclusion
* promotes sports and leisure within our communities
* supports local government to deliver services
* supports the Voluntary and Community Sector
* realises the value of our built heritage

The arts also supports 33,000 people employed in the creative industries here, delivering an annual GVA of £1.3 billion to the Northern Ireland economy.

Why does NI only celebrate the arts when there is an Oscar to be won, a new play to be seen, an unveiling of a statue or a great new band to be heard? Art happens all the time, in every corner of our community. In schools, in hospitals, on stage, on screen and online. Art gives so much. We are asking you to reverse the cuts of over 40% that the arts have suffered and to show England, Wales, Scotland and the Republic just how much this Assembly values, respects and appreciates Northern Ireland art.

Please support us and make a budget decision which reverses the cuts. Our communities will thank you.

NAME