

Testimony of Commissioner David Lindstrom

January 31, 2012

Joint Education Budget Committee

Good Afternoon, Madam Chairman and Members of the Committee. My name is David Lindstrom; I am also a new Commissioner of the Kansas Arts Commission and I would echo Vice Chair, Herzog's comments that the current Arts Commission is truly committed to championing the enhancement of Kansas' arts and cultural heritage.

My current role on the Commission is to lead the Committee charged with the launch of our Specialty License Plate Program (LPP) which will begin production this year. It is anticipated that the LPP will be a primary Funding source for the Kansas Arts Commission & ultimately, the Arts programs that we support throughout the State.

In botany, a "bud" is an undeveloped shoot of a leaf; once formed, it has the potential to develop into a flower. The Kansas Arts Commission License Plate Program is our "BUD" and it is developing as we speak. Once it is formed, this program also has the potential to blossom.

It is fitting that the anticipated outcomes of the Kansas Arts Commission License Plate Program forms the word "BUD"! I am delighted to report to this Committee & I fully expect that the License Plate Program will be a Catalyst to:

1. Build the Brand and a new awareness for Kansas Arts.
2. Unify Arts Communities behind a Resurgent KS Arts program.
3. Develop into a Reliable and Attractive Revenue source.

It is ambitious, but it is achievable –

There are 13 States that promote the arts with special license plates and use the associated fees to fund the state arts agency or a cultural endowment. Among those state arts agencies currently involved in such programs, the revenue is a significant source of agency funding for only California, Texas and Tennessee (which receives a portion of proceeds from more than one special plate). The other States with such programs are; North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama, New York, Indiana, Florida, Nevada, Virginia, Michigan and Oklahoma.

As a point of reference, California has a population of 37,000,000 and there are 67,000 vehicles with State of the Arts license plates. Sales & renewals of these plates account for 60% (\$3,350,000) of the total California Arts Council annual budget of \$5,600,000. Kansas has a population of 2,853,000 and has 2,501,476 registered vehicles. Our goal, to get 4,000 Kansas vehicles to purchase State of the Arts license plate, is ambitious. But it is only .14% of our population and that is certainly achievable. At \$100 per plate, our program will generate \$400,000 of "NEW-NET" revenue to support local arts programs across the State. SIMPLE but not EASY!

The Kansas Arts Commission has committed all proceeds from this program to be directed to the Operational Support of our local Kansas Arts programs. Further, the Commission has approved a policy which, not only will significantly assist us in our endeavor to reach our Goal of 4,000 plates sold, but will also have a tremendously positive impact on local arts programs and/or nonprofit service organizations in Kansas. The policy allows Kansas Arts organizations and/or non-profit service organizations, which secure sales for a minimum of 10 "State of the Arts" license plates, to share 50% (\$50) of the initial LPP (\$100) fee: A Win/Win policy.

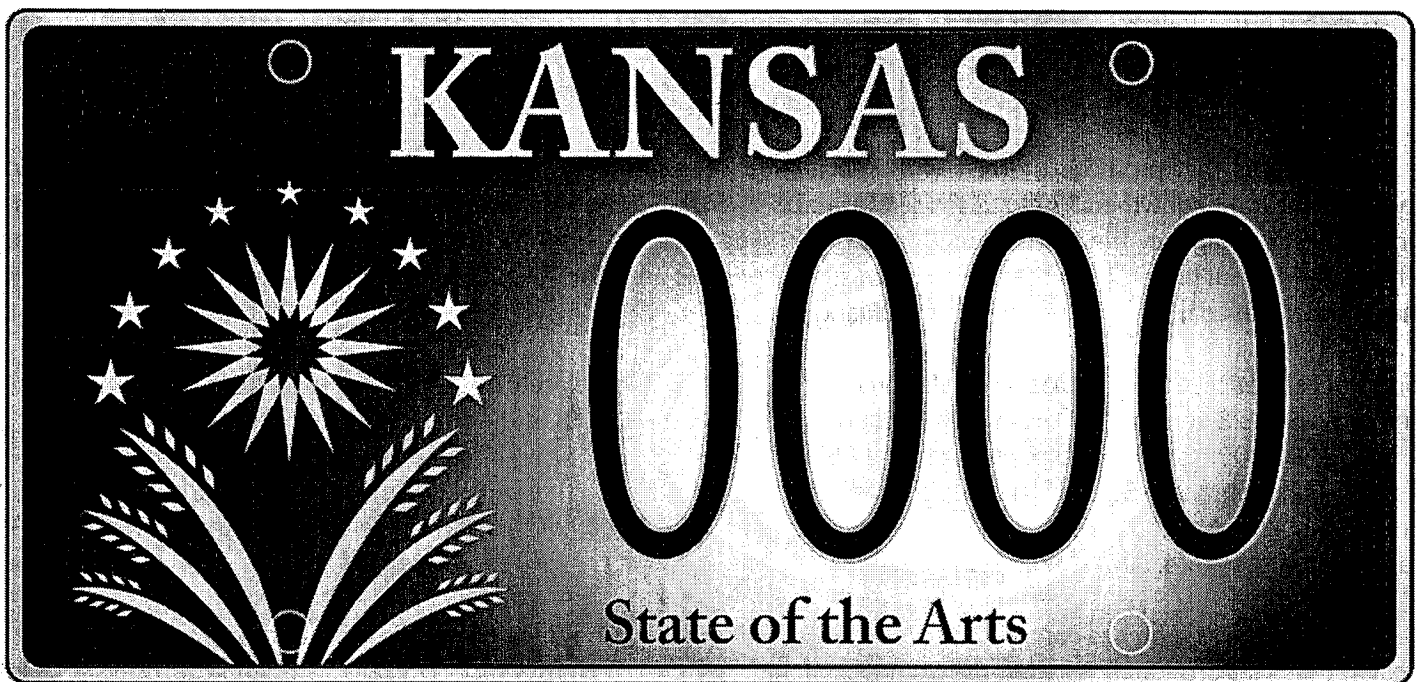
As was previously mentioned by Commissioner Herzog, the Commission has already received a \$20,000 grant from the Kansas Arts Foundation. This is important because these funds will enable the Commission to pay the specialty license plate application fee to the Kansas Department of Motor Vehicles and these funds will allow us to develop our initial marketing materials. There is still work for the Commission to do prior to the actual launch of our program. To begin production and distribution of the "State of the Arts" license plate, the Kansas Arts Commission must compile a list of 500 people who are committed to acquire one. We anticipate completing this task and submitting the list in February.

When HL Hunt, Texas oil tycoon, one of the wealthiest people in the world at the time of his death, and the father of my former boss, Lamar Hunt, was asked what the secret to his success was, he said *"You must first determine what it is that you want to accomplish."* Then, he said, *"You must decide what you are willing to sacrifice in order to achieve your GOAL."*

- If each of us sincerely believe, as the organization's Mission describes, that the fundamental reason for the Kansas Arts Commission to exist is to provide opportunities for the people of Kansas to experience, celebrate and value the arts throughout their lives,
- If we truly acknowledge that we want to develop and support a new awareness for Kansas Arts and that it is necessary to secure a reliable and attractive revenue source going forward, then,
- We all must decide what it is that we are willing to sacrifice to achieve these primary objectives.

The Kansas Arts Commission License Plate Program won't happen simply because it is a good idea. It won't happen just because we have a structure and a strategy for realistic outcomes. It will happen if we have a precise focus on what it is that we want to accomplish and, most importantly, if we all (the Kansas Arts Communities, the Kansas Arts Commission, our Kansas Legislative Leadership, and in this case, anyone with a car registered in Kansas) lend a hand and commit to working together. After all, the acronym for TEAM is - *Together Everyone Achieves More* -

We are currently developing our application forms, our marketing material and our web site. In addition, we have ordered an 800 number to facilitate our phone orders. I have attached a copy of our signup sheet for those interested in being among the first 500 who sign up for our plate.



Remember, every license plate is a mobile billboard which demonstrates Kansas' support for our great art and culture.