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**KANSAS ARTS COMMISSION CHAIRMAN RESPONDS TO
GOVERNOR'S EXECUTIVE REORGANIZATION ORDERS**

Topeka, Kan. – Today, Governor Sam Brownback signed Executive Reorganization Orders to eliminate the Kansas Arts Commission as a state agency and support a private nonprofit arts foundation in its place.

According to Kansas Arts Commission Chairman Henry Schwaller, the Governor's orders will cause a loss to the state of over \$1.2 million each year.

“The Governor's action will not help, but hurt Kansas in the long run,” said Schwaller of Hays. “We understand that the state budget is a challenge, but there must be a better solution,” he said. “The arts are a critical part of the Kansas economy and this Order will significantly impair our state's ability to retain and attract businesses.”

The policy of the National Endowment for the Arts is to support state agencies that have adequate resources to develop and implement an *NEA approved plan* that includes services to underserved populations and a comprehensive arts in education program.

“At this time the Governor's proposal does not allow for a thorough planning process to take place, and maintain current services to Kansas,” said Schwaller. “More importantly, the Governor's proposed funding level would not be sufficient to allow for operations, planning and granting.”

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The only other private nonprofit state-designated arts council is the Vermont Arts Council; Vermont meets the required NEA match and raises approximately \$140,000 per year in private funds – none of which are used for grants.

“Vermont also provides \$750,000 of government funding for the arts to augment the private funds that are raised,” he said. “The level of arts funding provided by Vermont coupled with the private funds they raise more than meet the 1:1 matching requirement established by the NEA.”

Schwaller adds, “Arts advocates across Kansas have contacted their Legislators, urging them to reject this Order because of the economic impact this will have on their communities. We will seek a resolution from the Legislature to rescind this Order.”

The Kansas Arts Commission is a state agency, funded by the State of Kansas and the National Endowment for the Arts, dedicated to promoting and supporting the arts in Kansas. Its mission is to provide opportunities for the people of Kansas to experience, celebrate and value the arts throughout their lives. For more information on the Kansas Arts Commission, please visit the KAC website at <http://arts.ks.gov>.

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