



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE HOUSE BOSTON, MA 02133

REPRESENTATIVE PAUL A. SCHMID

8th Bristol District
Room 466, State House
Tel: (617) 722-2017

Paul.Schmid@MAHouse.Gov

Vice-Chairman
Committee on State Administration and Regulatory
Oversight

Contact: Jessica Katon
Office of Representative Paul A. Schmid, III
Telephone: 617-722-2017
Jessica.Katon@mahouse.gov

Local Organizations see Notable Increase in Grant Funding Following Meeting with Area Legislators

FALL RIVER- Local cultural organizations in Fall River, Freetown, New Bedford, and Westport have seen a notable increase in grant funding from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) following a meeting with area legislators, State Representative Paul A. Schmid and State Representative Carole A. Fiola. A proven success this meeting centered on how to bring additional resources and funding to the many cultural organizations throughout Southeastern Massachusetts.

Massachusetts has long been a home to arts and culture and the MCC remains committed to promoting their vitality through a wide range of grants and initiatives. In recent years funding in the area was stagnant and it seemed only a small number of organizations were applying for these vital grants. In May of 2018, Schmid and Fiola convened along with community cultural organizations in Fall River to outline the possibilities for the new year. This most recent fiscal year will see a more than \$20,000 increase as well as a nearly \$35,000 increase over the last 5 years.

With the introduction of this new funding southeastern Massachusetts will ideally see an increase in tourism, economic activity, and cultural production due largely to these organizations. "One of our biggest challenges we, as legislators, are met with is ensuring the proper resources are well known within the community," said **State Representative Paul A. Schmid (D-Westport)**. "It is important that we facilitate these conversations between local stakeholders and organizations such as Mass Cultural Council and we are excited to see such great results".

"I am appreciative of the Massachusetts Cultural Council's efforts in responding to our request of having a meeting with local arts and culture organizations so they can learn how to apply for state funding" said **State Representative Carole Fiola (D-Fall River)**. "We will continue to have conversations with the Massachusetts Cultural Council to ensure our local organizations are aware of upcoming grant opportunities which builds upon the importance of showcasing history and culture in our region."

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