

Property Tax Exemption AND Deduction for Charitable Giving Talking Points for Maine Museums and Archives



MAINE'S ARCHIVES AND MUSEUMS ARE STEWARDS OF MAINE'S RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE.

The Governor's proposal to remove the property tax exemption on properties valued at \$500,000 or above AND to remove the tax deduction for charitable giving threatens the work of Maine's archives and museums. In a recent survey of our membership, 88% were concerned by the proposal and 65% felt the proposal would have a negative impact on their organization's ability to meet their mission.

MAINE'S ARCHIVES & MUSEUMS SERVE THE PUBLIC.

- We **serve as stewards** over a wealth of collections held in the public trust.
- We **preserve and protect** Maine's historic landmarks for future generations.
- Our buildings, grounds and collections are **publicly accessible**.
- We **educate** our school children, following state standards and core curriculum.
- We **employ** Mainers.

MAM'S 300 MEMBERS ARE WORKHORSES IN THE ECONOMY.

- We **spend about \$26 million annually** on goods and services in our community.
- We **serve about 2.7 million visitors** and patrons each year.
- We host about **154,000 schoolchildren** each year through special tours and programs.

MAINE'S 1100+ ARCHIVES & MUSEUMS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF MAINE'S TOURIST ECONOMY.

- Cultural tourism is **Maine's largest and most important industry**.
- We **attract visitors** who stay 53% longer, spend 36% more, and travel in the off-season.
- In 2009, Maine's museums welcomed **6,832,330 visitors**.
- In 2009 visitors to museums resulted in an **annual economic impact of \$148 million** and generated **\$7.5 million in tax revenue**.
- Cultural heritage tourism supports some **1300 jobs** in Maine.

EVERY CULTURAL HERITAGE ORGANIZATION WILL BE IMPACTED—NOT JUST LARGE ONES

- The majority of MAM Members operate on **budgets of less than \$25,000**.
- On average only about 7% of our budgets come from government funds; the rest comes from private donations. Removing the tax deduction for charitable giving would **hinder our ability to raise private funds and meet our missions**.
- Maine's cultural heritage organizations are cash poor but property rich. Paying property taxes on these holdings would **impact budgets, programming, operating hours and staff levels**.
- Reduced programming & operating hours means **reduced visitation and a reduction in the accompanying tourist dollars**.
- Our collections and landmark historic buildings, in essence **Maine's cultural heritage, would be in peril** as the dollars needed to preserve these buildings are stretched to pay taxes and the ability to raise funds limited by removal of the incentivizing tax deduction for charitable giving..