

16 July 2012

The Secretariat
Local Government and Environment
Select Committee Office
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON 6011

Old Public Trust Building
131-135 Lambton Quay
Wellington 6011, New Zealand
PO Box 3806, Wellington 6140

Submission on the: **Local Government Act 2002 Amendment Bill**

From: **The Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa (Creative New Zealand)**

Creative New Zealand **DOES** wish to speak to this submission

Dear Sir / Madam

Creative New Zealand is an autonomous Crown entity established under the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa Act 1994. As New Zealand's national arts development agency, Creative New Zealand's purpose is to encourage, promote and support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders. Creative New Zealand receives funding through Vote: Arts, Culture and Heritage and the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board. In 2011/2012 Creative New Zealand invested approximately **\$38 million** in the arts sector nationally.

Creative New Zealand has a keen interest in the Local Government Act 2002 Amendment Bill. The Bill may have a significant effect on how local authorities choose to support arts and culture with the potential for a substantial reduction in current levels of support.

The Local Government Act's requirement for local authorities to play a broad role in promoting the cultural well-being of their communities has provided a clear legislative basis for local authorities to support arts and cultural infrastructure within their respective districts. Creative New Zealand notes that the removal of all references to "cultural well-being" by the Bill could be interpreted by local authorities as a mandate from central government to substantially reduce their support for arts and cultural infrastructure and services.

The 2011 results of Creative New Zealand's longitudinal research study into New Zealanders' attitudes to, attendance at and participation in the arts show that most New Zealanders (73%) want their local council to continue to support the arts. This sentiment has not changed since the study was begun in 2005. In Christchurch 94% of surveyed residents also agreed that "it's important that Christchurch is recognised as a place that supports excellence in the arts". 90% agreed that "arts and culture have a vital role to play in the re-building of Christchurch's future." There is also a growing body of research relating to the contribution of the arts to a community's social cohesion as well as to an area's economic prosperity. The 2010 New Zealand International Festival of the Arts, for example, generated almost \$23.1 million in new spending in the Wellington region.

Creative New Zealand relies on local authorities' cooperation and co-investment to fulfill its mandate of encouraging, promoting and supporting the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders. The legislation should allow for this cooperation to continue into the future. Any reduction in arts and cultural services provided by local authorities is likely to result in additional pressure on Creative New Zealand and other central government agencies to make up the shortfall.

Creative New Zealand submits that funding of arts and cultural infrastructure and services should be explicitly included as a core requirement of local authorities in the Bill. We note the inclusion of the "cultural interests of people and communities" in the principles outlined in Section 14 (1) (h) (i) of the Bill. However, we believe that the importance of art and culture in local and regional communities should be reflected in the Bill by including cultural interests in the Bill's definition of core services (Section 11A). We note that "other community infrastructure" (Section 11A (e)) could include arts and cultural infrastructure but this would be open to interpretation and would not ensure that arts and cultural infrastructure would remain fundamental and essential areas of responsibility for local authorities.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Wainwright', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Stephen Wainwright
Chief Executive