

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005**

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SENATE DRS65407-LG-423A* (03/06)

Short Title: Asheville Art Museum Funds.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senator Nesbitt.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO EXPAND THE ASHEVILLE ART MUSEUM'S FACILITIES.

Whereas, founded in 1948, the Asheville Art Museum's mission is to collect, preserve, and interpret American art of the 20th and 21st centuries with a focus on work of significance to the Southeast; and

Whereas, the Museum's programs engage diverse resident and tourist audiences of all ages in active exploration of themselves – their past and future – and their communities, through interpretation of American art since the 20th century; and

Whereas, the Museum promotes the integration of the arts into the daily life of Western North Carolina and the Southeast and provides opportunities for access to, experience with, and enjoyment of, the finest visual arts through meaningful programs and makes available professional stewardship of its collections and its other resources; and

Whereas, the Museum is a place of education, exploration, and inspiration, an advocate for the arts and artists, an economic engine, and the preeminent arts resource for the Asheville, Buncombe County, and the Western North Carolina region; and

Whereas, between 2000 and 2005 total Museum participation exceeded 1.2 million people, and in the past year over 17,800 Museum visitors came from 46 different states and 916 individual communities around the country; and

Whereas, between fiscal years 2002-2004, more than 575,000 kindergarteners through seniors participated in Museum exhibitions, educational programs, and events; and

Whereas, in 2005 the Museum served 17,557 kindergarten through college-age students from 23 Western North Carolina counties as well as school districts in Tennessee, South Carolina, and Virginia, and 41,356 hours of in-depth arts educational programming were completed for audiences of all ages and interests; and

1 Whereas, between 1996 and 2006 the Museum's permanent collection grew
2 from 900 to over 2,000 works of art; and

3 Whereas, due to limited space, the Museum can exhibit only 3% of the work
4 held on behalf of Western North Carolina and the State; and

5 Whereas, the Museum is working with renowned architect James Stewart
6 Polshek Partnership, local architects, and community members to design a dynamic
7 facility that will preserve the historic Pack Library Building, create a destination for the
8 State's best known arts region, and anchor the New Pack Square Park; and

9 Whereas, data gathered through a 2003 study commissioned by the Museum
10 indicated that at that time the Asheville Art Museum annually generated an average of
11 \$2.2 million in local spending through its own direct activities and the spending of its
12 single paying attendees; and

13 Whereas, the planned expansion project, with a preliminary construction cost
14 of \$18 million, can generate as much as \$37.7 million in regional economic impact with
15 up to 80% of construction funds spent locally; Now, therefore,
16 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

17 **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Asheville
18 Art Museum Association, Incorporated, a nonprofit organization, the sum of five
19 million dollars (\$5,000,000) for the 2006-2007 fiscal year to expand the Museum's
20 current facilities, which will provide the Museum with additional space for rotating and
21 permanent collection exhibitions, educational public programs, community meetings,
22 media presentations, lectures and performances, retail sales, and storage. The Asheville
23 Art Museum is the only visual arts organization of its kind serving the 23 counties that
24 comprise Western North Carolina, an area of 9,807 square miles with a population of
25 1,169,475, representing 14% of the State's population.

26 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2006.