

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005**

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SENATE BILL 1634*

Short Title: Asheville Art Museum Funds. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Nesbitt; and Apodaca.

Referred to: Appropriations/Base Budget.

May 18, 2006

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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