

STATEMENT FROM MANY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DEVIN LANDER IN RESPONSE TO THE 2015-16 EXECUTIVE BUDGET

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Troy—The Museum Association of New York (MANY), New York’s only state-wide membership association representing museums, historical societies, zoos, botanical gardens, and aquariums, views Governor Cuomo’s 2015-16 Executive Budget as a good starting point for ongoing discussions about the value of museums and other similar institutions to the overall State’s economy and quality of life.

“I applaud Governor Cuomo taking a hard look at the State’s economic and educational opportunities and seeking to invest in growth,” said MANY Executive Director Devin Lander. “We at MANY are especially excited about the possibilities outlined in the Governor’s Upstate Revitalization Competition grant program in which the State will set aside \$1.5 billion for the Upstate areas which will include funding for investing in tourism and quality of life initiatives. Museums and similar institutions are major tourism drivers across the State and act as institutions of optimism that help create the quality of life in communities that skilled workers desire. We hope that the Governor’s new initiative allows museums a fair share of the funding in this regard.”

Other budget highlights related to MANY members include:

- An increase of \$5 million for NYSCA’s grant programs, totaling \$41 million for 2015-16
- An increase of \$25 million for the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, totaling \$317 million for 2015-16
- An increase of \$100,000 for the zoos, botanical gardens and aquarium (ZBGA) fund, totaling \$11,450,000 for 2015-16
- The implementation of a \$45 million tourism campaign in 2015-16 to attract visitors from around the world. The program includes a third round of \$5 million in competitive funding through the Market NY initiative to support tourism marketing plans that best demonstrate regional collaboration among counties to promote regional attractions.

“I congratulate the Governor for increasing the vital funding to NYSCA, which has not seen an increase for years,” Lander said. “The museum field understands the essential role that NYSCA plays helping to fund and aid our colleagues across the State and MANY supports the Governor’s increase.”

“In all, I see many positives with the Governor’s agenda with relation to the museum field,” Lander went on to say. “MANY stands ready to advance this agenda and expand upon it further throughout the upcoming budget process.”