



1           Whereas, data gathered through a 2004 study commissioned by the museum  
2 indicated that at that time the museum annually generated an average of \$2.7 million in  
3 local economic impact, including \$63,000 in local government revenue, a positive  
4 impact that benefits Western North Carolina each and every year; and

5           Whereas, total museum participation exceeded 1.2 million people between  
6 2001 and 2007. The museum's permanent collection grew from 900 to over 2,200 works  
7 of art between 1996 and 2008, yet only 3% of the work held on behalf of Western North  
8 Carolina can be exhibited at present because of space limitations; and

9           Whereas, the museum has outgrown its current facility in Pack Place and  
10 must increase public education and exhibition space to continue to meet the region's  
11 needs. This is crucial if the museum is to continue in a leadership role in the  
12 developmental, educational, and economic health of downtown Asheville, Buncombe  
13 County, and the Western North Carolina region; and

14           Whereas, the planned expansion project, with a preliminary construction cost  
15 of \$18 million, will have a significant positive economic impact. It will generate as  
16 much as \$31.7 million in regional economic impact, with up to 80% of construction  
17 funds spent locally. Direct spending in the community by museum participants on  
18 parking, meals, and retail is anticipated at \$4.7 million in the first year following  
19 expansion and at similar levels in subsequent years. The expanded museum will be a  
20 new cultural destination for important special exhibitions, education programs,  
21 entertainment, retail, and dining – an education and economic engine in the heart of  
22 Asheville; and

23           Whereas, the museum is working with renowned architect James Stewart  
24 Polshek, local architects, and community members to design a dynamic facility that will  
25 preserve the historic Pack Library Building, create a destination for the State's best-  
26 known arts region, and anchor the new Pack Square Park; and

27           Whereas, the museum has already received gifts and pledges totaling \$4.7  
28 million, including vital support from the Buncombe County Tourism Development  
29 Authority, planning grants from both Buncombe County and the City of Asheville, and  
30 has been named a priority project in the Hub Project plan and by the Asheville Area  
31 Chamber of Commerce; and

32           Whereas, the State demonstrated commitment to the project with an initial  
33 appropriation of \$25,000 during the 2005 legislative session. The museum has also  
34 received \$11,300 in planning grants from the North Carolina Arts Council; Now,  
35 therefore,

36 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

37           **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Asheville  
38 Art Museum Association, Incorporated, a nonprofit organization, the sum of two  
39 hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) for the 2008-2009 fiscal year to help the  
40 museum complete the schematic design phase of the expansion project. Expansion of  
41 the museum's current facilities will provide the museum with additional space for  
42 changing and permanent collection exhibitions, educational public programs,  
43 community meetings, media presentations, lectures and performances, retail sales, and  
44 storage. The Asheville Art Museum is the only visual arts organization of its kind

1 serving the 24 counties that comprise Western North Carolina, an area of 10,601 square  
2 miles with a population of 1,386,871, representing sixteen percent (16%) of the State's  
3 population and twenty-two percent (22%) of the land area in North Carolina.

4 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2008.