June 5, 2012

Florida Arts Council
Division of Cultural Affairs
Florida Department of State
R.A. Gray Building, 3rd Floor
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Dear Florida Arts Council Members:

I’m writing to you today in support of the Museum of Discovery and Science’s request for Florida Department of State/Division of Cultural Affairs funding under the Cultural Facilities grant program in 2013-2014.

The Downtown Development Authority is a public-private partnership representing businesses and corporations aligned in their interest and promotion of downtown Fort Lauderdale. We are very proud of the scale and pace of downtown development over the past twenty years or so, taking our skyline from a single office tower and virtually no residential development to a glistening array of many office and residential buildings, all at high occupancy.

One of the reasons that has taken place is the scope and quality of the cultural infrastructure that has developed in the downtown area. Among those, there is no cultural organization that does a better job of serving over half a million visitors, including nearly 100,000 school children, and tourists from around the world, than the Museum of Discovery and Science. Not only does the Museum bring thousands of visitors to downtown every day, but the corresponding economic impact is tremendous.

My colleagues and I take great pride in the Museum’s newly-opened EcoDiscovery Center, which was built with over 80% private funds, with a substantial portion coming from businesses, foundations and individuals based in downtown Fort Lauderdale.

We understand that the Museum is seeking a grant toward their $7.5 million Phase 2 expansion project, which will feature a spectacular science park on Broward Boulevard, the major thoroughfare into downtown, with over 57,000 cars passing it each day. No doubt the science park will attract even more visitors to the Museum, and hence further boost the local economy. In addition, the infrastructure improvements on the 20-year old building will assure that it remains in first-class condition for visitors and residents to continue to enjoy for decades to come.

We at the DDA are active and enthusiastic supporters of the Museum, and would respectfully urge your support of the Museum’s application for this important grant.

Sincerely,

Chris Wren
Executive Director
June 5, 2012

Florida Arts Council
Division of Cultural Affairs/Florida Department of State
R.A. Gray Building, 3rd Floor
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Dear Florida Arts Council Members:

I am writing in support of the Museum of Discovery and Science's request for Florida Department of State/Division of Cultural Affairs funding under the Cultural Facilities Grant Program for 2013-2014.

AutoNation has been a loyal supporter of the Museum for two decades. AutoNation's Executive Vice-President, Jon Ferrando, serves proudly as the Chairman of the Museum's Board of Trustees, and has done so since 2006. We also contribute financially to support the Museum's annual operating expenses through sponsorships of programs, films and events.

In addition, AutoNation was honored to kick off the Museum's most recent capital campaign and donated $3 million dollars to the new EcoDiscovery Center.

AutoNation has a strong commitment to the community and we believe in working to make our communities better places to live. Whether here in South Florida or in one of our 14 markets nationwide, we promote our associates' involvement in the community and support the nonprofit organizations that make a difference.

The Museum of Discovery and Science is one of those organizations. We are proud of our history with the Museum and we look forward to the future. This is why we enthusiastically support the Museum's new renovation project and respectfully urge you to look favorably upon their application for this grant.

Sincerely,

Gael Butler
Vice-President of Corporate Affairs
May 25, 2012

Florida Arts Council
Division of Cultural Affairs
Florida Department of State
R.A. Gray Building, 3rd Floor
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Re: Museum of Discovery and Science

Dear Florida Arts Council Members:

I'm pleased to offer my support of the Museum of Discovery and Science’s request for Florida Department of State/Division of Cultural Affairs funding under the Cultural Facilities grant program in 2013-2014.

The City of Fort Lauderdale has been a supportive and involved partner with the Museum from the beginning in 1977. The City actually owns the land that the current building sits on, and provided leadership funding of $8 million through a bond issue to build the current Museum back in 1992. Personally, I've been supportive at both the City and State levels, and have also served on the Museum's board of trustees for a number of years.

The Museum is a vital resource for the City. It brings economic vitality to the downtown as one of the flagship cultural institutions. It is also the highest visited museum in South Florida, which not only benefits the local economy but also the profile of our City. In addition, the Museum is one of the very best attractions in South Florida for families with children, which has great value to residents, tourists and also as an economic development feature for attracting companies and their employees to Fort Lauderdale.

The new EcoDiscovery Center brings the Museum to a whole new level, and the roughly $20 million in private funds raised for it is a resounding testament to the value of the Museum to this community.
The Museum's new plans for the Science Park will make it an even more popular destination, and add a very nice feature to the main corridor linking I-95 to downtown Fort Lauderdale. The additional improvements to the now 20 year old building are equally important in keeping the Museum up to date and providing enjoyable experiences for generations to come.

The Commissioners and I are enthusiastic supporters of the Museum, and would respectfully urge your approval of the Museum's application for this important grant.

Very truly yours,

John P. "Jack" Seiler  
Mayor
June 5, 2012

Florida Arts Council  
Division of Cultural Affairs/Florida Department of State  
R.A. Gray Building, 3rd Floor  
500 South Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Dear Council Members:

The Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau has always worked to market the Museum of Discovery and Science’s outstanding exhibits, IMAX films and science activities, including hosting media and meeting planners for site visits. The recent opening of the EcoDiscovery Center marks a new era for the Museum, and an exciting opportunity to bring even more visitors to Greater Fort Lauderdale. I was happy to attend your EcoDiscovery Center Grant Opening preview event in November, and personally see the fascinating Everglades exhibits, new classrooms and science theater for myself.

As the Museum moves forward with a new capital campaign to make repairs and renovations to the original 20-year old building, I wholeheartedly lend my support to this project. Building improvements are needed to provide the best Museum-going experience for visitors near and far, as well as ensure the quality of one of Fort Lauderdale’s most important cultural facilities. I urge the Council to support the Museum’s grant request for Cultural Facilities Program funding in 2013.

Sincerely,

Nicki E. Grossman  
President & CEO

100 East Broward Boulevard, Suite 200, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 • (954) 765-4466 • fax (954) 765-4467