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House of Representatives  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the House of Representatives

FROM: Representative Matt Smith

DATE: March 8, 2011

SUBJECT: Co-sponsorship of Resolution – Funding of Museums in Pennsylvania

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In the near future, I will be introducing a resolution that would direct the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study the funding of museums by the Commonwealth.

According to the Pennsylvania Federation of Museums and Historical Organizations, Pennsylvania is home to over 1,000 museums. These museums preserve and display scientific, artistic, and historical artifacts while providing educational and recreational opportunities for those of all ages.

Museums in Pennsylvania have historically received state funding from the General Fund Budget and grant programs. In recent years, significant cuts have been made to museum funding by the Commonwealth, including the elimination of the Museum Assistance Grant Program in Fiscal Year 2010-2011.

According to a study by the American Museum Association, while private donations are the single largest source of revenue for museums, they also receive approximately 25% of their operating funds from governmental entities. As such, unpredictability or elimination of governmental funding poses significant challenges for museums.

The resolution that I will be introducing would direct the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study of the Commonwealth's museums, including the mechanisms and amounts of funding allocated to museums by the Commonwealth. The study would also be required to include recommendations to improve the funding of museums in the Commonwealth.

If you would like to co-sponsor this resolution, please contact Jamie Fetter at (717) 783-1850 or [jfetter@pahouse.net](mailto:jfetter@pahouse.net).