**Museums Advocacy Day 2017**

**Publicity Tools**

**Economic Engine Op-Ed**

 Most of us realize the economy here in [insert city or state or region] is multi-faceted, with industries such as [insert key industries, i.e., agriculture, manufacturing, high tech, tourism, etc.]. But when you and your family come to visit the [insert name of museum] or other institutions here in [insert region], you might not realize that museums also power the local economy, and communities nationwide.

Each year, we welcome [XXXX] visitors to the [name of museum]. Many of those visitors are our neighbors, while others are out-of-towners, coming to [name of city] to sample our cultural offerings. A study by Mandala Research—a leading travel market research firm—finds that cultural tourists stay longer and spend 60% more than other tourists. They spend those dollars in [name of city] local eateries, at our local hotels, and local gift and novelty shops, creating jobs and keeping our local businesses thriving. Overall, cultural tourism is a $171 billion industry in the United States.

 In direct expenditures alone, U.S. museums inject $21 billion into the economy, and employ nearly half a million Americans. Museums and other cultural organizations attract businesses to communities large and small. In fact, museums and other nonprofit cultural organizations return more than $5 in tax revenues for every $1 they receive in funding from all levels of government. Clearly museums and cultural organizations are a wise investment by governments; that kind of return is enough to make even Warren Buffett swoon.

 Locally, the statistics are just as impressive. [Insert local data or successes with recent exhibitions.]

 So please join me and my colleagues in sharing your appreciation of museums with our elected officials. The museum field will be doing so on February 28 in Washington, D.C., meeting with our congressional delegation and their staffs. We urge you to lend your voice to ours. At the American Alliance of Museums website ([www.aam-us.org](http://www.aam-us.org)/advocacy), you’ll find advocacy tools that let you convey your support for museums to your members of Congress with just a few clicks.

Our museums mean so much for [name of locale]. They certainly mean business.