



Senator Katy Gallagher

SENATOR FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Evol McLeod & Nigel Featherstone
childersgroup@gmail.com

Dear Mr Featherstone and Ms McLeod,

Thank you for your letter raising concerns about cuts to arts funding across Australia in the most recent budget.

I too share your concern and just last week following the budget detail becoming available I asked a question in Senate Question Time of the Arts Minister about what cuts were contained in the budget, particularly for the major national institutions here in Canberra.

Minister George Brandis QC responded bluntly with the answer of “none” which is untrue. The budget does indeed make cuts to the national institutions compounding cuts in the previous year’s budget for the arts.

The National Gallery of Australia will receive \$61.5m for 2015-16, down from \$63.1m – a cut of 2.5 per cent. The National Museum will go from \$48.2m this year, to \$47.6m next year – down 1.2 per cent. The National Portrait Gallery takes a much worse cut, from \$15.5m to \$13.8m (11 per cent).

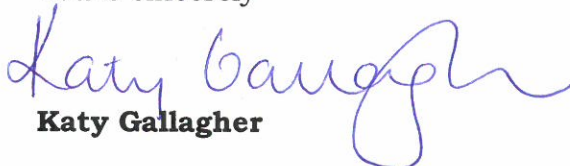
The Budget papers also show that the Government will cut \$13.2m over five years from arts and cultural programs in the Australia Council, Screen Australia, and the Ministry for the Arts.

This response from the Minister makes it difficult to have confidence that the areas that you are seeking clarification on will be responded to clearly and honestly.

Cuts to an industry which plays an important role in the community and relies heavily on support from the government are not acceptable and the Labor Party will be standing up against these unfair cuts in the upcoming Senate Estimates and budget debate processes. I would also be interested to see any response that you receive from Minister Brandis to your questions.

Thank you once again for your letter on this matter.

Yours sincerely



Katy Gallagher