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***** Press Release *****

Mayor Fulop Recommends Jersey City Withdraws Arts Referendum to Minimize Taxpayer Impact in Wake of Pandemic's Destructive Path

JERSEY CITY –**Mayor Steven M. Fulop** announces today he will propose at the next council meeting the withdrawal of the Arts Referendum planned for the November ballot to allow voters to decide on the establishment of an Arts and Culture Trust Fund. The proposal to implement the special levy was announced in February, following years of working alongside local arts organizations to lobby state legislators to implement the mechanisms that would allow for long-term arts funding.

“We were the first to put out an actionable plan supporting sustainable funding to benefit our burgeoning arts industry and our residents, but the world is changed today and we want to minimize the impact on our taxpayers as much as possible,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “There is a lot of uncertainty between now and November, so we want to do the responsible thing and start making the tough decisions now so that we can better plan as we come to realize the full magnitude of the pandemic’s economic impacts.”

The Jersey City Arts and Culture Trust Fund was mirrored after the success of Jersey City’s Open Space Trust Fund enacted by the Fulop Administration in 2016, of which Ward B Councilwoman Mira Prinz-Arey chaired.

“We look forward to the day when we can reopen our renowned art galleries and kickoff the summer art shows that attract people from all over the region, and our arts community knows we will continue to fight for them and support them as we get through these challenging times together,” said **Ward B Councilwoman Mira Prinz-Arey**.

The special tax levy to fund arts and culture stems from a bill Governor Murphy signed into law last December. The bill allows municipalities to propose a tax dedicated to the arts within the city.

“This is not an easy decision, and we have many more difficult decisions ahead of us as we work to recover from this health crisis. I’m confident that our vibrant arts scene will continue to see significant growth and support as we all work together, as Jersey City does, to get back on our feet,” concluded Mayor Fulop.

All media inquiries should be directed to Kimberly Scalcione at KScalcione@jcnj.org.