Arts council is cut by 11.6% in proposal

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Funds of the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts would be cut by 11.6 percent under Governor DiPrete's proposed state budget.

The state share of the budget would be cut by 9.8 percent, which takes into account projected cuts in federal funds.

The proposed state portion of the arts council budget is $378,217, or $41,030 less than the current state portion, which is $419,361.

The proposed total arts council budget, including state and federal money and special grants, is $817,171, or $106,830 less than the current total budget of $924,001.

Governor DiPrete has proposed changing the status of the arts council from an independent agency to a commission within the Executive Department. The council is one of several independent state agencies DiPrete wants moved into the executive branch so there would be "greater accountability."

He said he has no specific criticism of the arts council. "I think they're doing a good job," he said.

Figures for the 1985 arts budget include about $80,000 in supplemental funds approved by the General Assembly last summer. If those funds are excluded and the proposed 1986 budget is compared with the 1985 budget as initially approved by the General Assembly, the 1986 budget represents a 9.9 percent increase in state support for the arts.