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(DES MOINES) – More than 25 years ago, Governor Terry Branstad led the effort to build the new State Historical Building, where Iowans and visitors interact with historic artifacts and engage in educational and cultural experiences.

On the 25th Anniversary in December, Governor Branstad and Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds will serve as honorary chairs for the State Historical Building 25th Anniversary Gala, an event to celebrate this milestone and to raise funds for new exhibits in the State Historical Museum.

“I love Iowa and I love Iowa history,” Governor Branstad said today during his weekly press conference. “In the late 1970s, when I was Lieutenant Governor, it was very clear that we needed to build a new historical building. After I became Governor, we took on that challenge and I’m now very pleased to celebrate this anniversary. I encourage all Iowans to join Lieutenant Governor Reynolds and me in supporting Iowa history.”

The Gala will be at 7 p.m., Friday, December 14, 2012, at the State Historical Building, 600 E. Locust Street in Des Moines. RSVPs are required by contacting the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs at [515-281-7471](tel:515-281-7471) or HistoricalGala@iowa.gov. Holiday cocktail attire requested. Tickets are \$100 per person or \$75 per young professional (35 and younger). Gala Presenting Sponsors include Frantz-Hobart Management Services, Hy-Vee, John Deere, MidAmerican Energy and Musco Lighting.

As part of the Gala, an exhibition of 25 objects from the State Historical Museum's permanent

Governor Branstad and Lt. Governor Reynolds celebrate State Historical Building's 25th Anniversary Gala

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collection will be on display – one artifact representing each year of the building's past 25 years. Photos, video and archived materials will be shown throughout the night to give Iowans a look a back, and two new interactive exhibits *99 Counties* and *Iowa History IQ* also will be on display.

In addition, the Gala will feature Iowa entertainment including performances by Hot Club of Des Moines, Flying Pig Fiddle & Banjo and Decoy, while artists Gabriel Lueders and Van Holmgren will showcase works. Governor Branstad and Lt. Governor Reynolds will offer remarks, and legendary opera singer Simon Estes will give a special performance during the evening.

The State Historical Building opened in December 1987 and is home to the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs and its two divisions – the Iowa Arts Council and the State Historical Society of Iowa, along with the State Historical Museum, the State Historical Library & Archives, the State Historic Preservation Office, the State Records Center and eight historic sites across Iowa.

Since its construction, the building has been a catalyst for investment and improvements in Des Moines' Historic East Village, bridging the capitol complex to the river and igniting the development of businesses and neighborhoods.

It also serves as a forum for cultural and civic engagement and is a hub for hands-on educational opportunities. It has hosted presidents and politicians, advocates and enthusiasts, and learners of all ages. And, it is a one-of-a-kind destination where Iowans and other visitors engage in meaningful experiences rooted in history and the cultural arts.

“Over the past 25 years, the State Historical Building has provided Iowans and other visitors with a wide range of resources ranging from academic and genealogical research materials to educational programs and cultural arts performances,” DCA Director Mary Cownie said. “Today, however, people are searching for and receiving information in new and exciting ways. That presents challenges and opportunities for how we document and present Iowa history, and how we nurture and support the cultural arts throughout Iowa.

“Our goal with this celebration is to create a new platform that incorporates modern technologies into interactive museum exhibitions and programs,” Cownie said. “We also want to engage students and other Iowans through the cultural arts in ways that ignite their imaginations and encourage them to be more innovative in thinking of the next big thing that will position

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Iowa as a leader in this highly competitive global environment.”

More information about the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, the Iowa Arts Council and the State Historical Society of Iowa can be found on-line at www.culturalaffairs.org .

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The Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs is responsible for developing the state's interest in the areas of the arts, history and other cultural matters with the advice and assistance from its two divisions: the State Historical Society of Iowa and the Iowa Arts Council. DCA preserves, researches, interprets and promotes an awareness and understanding of local, state and regional history and stimulates and encourages the study and presentation of the performing and fine arts and public interest and participation in them. It implements tourism-related art and history projects as directed by the General Assembly and designs a comprehensive, statewide, long-range plan with the assistance of the Iowa Arts Council to develop the arts in Iowa. More information about DCA is available at www.culturalaffairs.org .