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Letters: Barnes move is a waste of philanthropy, money

Karen Heller raises provocative points about the philanthropic future of our region ("Alarming decline in philanthropy," Tuesday). Albert Barnes was one of the "better rich people" whom Heller is saying we need now. The Barnes Foundation is his gift to the public. How ironic. What good are "better rich people" if their philanthropic deeds are undone after they die?

The Annenberg, Pew, and Lenfest Foundations worked together to bring us the Kimmel Center, with its construction problems, legal battles, and operating deficits. It is very likely that Philadelphia will face the same problems with the Barnes Foundation if the art collection is moved to Philadelphia.

In this economic climate, it is unconscionable to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to move an art collection a mere five miles. A shuttle bus from the Parkway to the Barnes would be a cost-effective and sophisticated solution to link the Barnes to Philadelphia.

Why spend more to get less than what already exists 15 minutes away in Merion?

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