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Celebrating 75 years of service to theatre education

March 13, 2007

Dear Member of Congress:

The Educational Theatre Association is proud to be a co-sponsor of Arts Advocacy Day 2007.

EdTA is the professional organization for theatre education, dedicated to promoting and strengthening theatre education as a means of lifelong learning. We represent over 4,350 professional members, 100,000 current student members, and almost 2,000,000 alumni members in the United States.

Today the arts are recognized for the important role they play in the development of our citizens. They are integral to providing students with a full, comprehensive education. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings stated, "... we all know that a well-rounded curriculum that includes the arts and music contributes to higher academic achievement." In addition, the *New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce* found that, "Strong skills in the arts are essential qualities needed for success in the workplace."

On this day of advocating for the arts, we ask members of Congress to consider the research confirming the value of arts education and the issue briefs in order to fully support arts programs in our schools and in our communities through reauthorization of the elementary and secondary programs funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

We ask you to support the following actions:

- Appropriate \$53 million for the Arts in Education programs in the FY08 Labor-HHS-Educational appropriations bill.
- Require the U.S. Department of Education to conduct needed research on the status of arts education in America's public schools.
- Provide support for state and local education agencies to ensure that arts education continues to be included as a core academic subject in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- Hold a hearing on the importance and success of arts education programs throughout the country.

On behalf of the thousands of theatre teachers, parents and students in your state who believe that a portion of our tax dollars should be directed toward support of our nation's cultural and educational initiatives, we encourage you to help establish a lasting legacy of the arts and humanities for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gail Burns".

Gail Burns
President

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael J. Peitz".

Michael J. Peitz, CAE
Executive Director