



Association of Performing Arts Presenters

March 31, 2009

Dear Member of Congress:

Every spring, we ask you to support the performing arts in America by taking action in several key areas that enhance and strengthen our ability to improve the arts and cultural infrastructure and offerings in communities across the country. This year, we also want to talk with you about the value of American creativity, ingenuity, and diplomacy through the performing arts.

The performing arts play an important role as an economic catalyst in every community -- whether it is an orchestra hall in your district or an auditorium that presents drama and dance from the academic institutions you represent, or perhaps a new arts construction project your constituents are striving to create.

Across the country, arts presenters have active arts education programs that help bridge the gap when public schools lack the necessary resources to provide a quality arts education for every child. Scientific studies have shown that each child that benefits from quality arts education scores higher on math and reading tests and are less likely to drop out of school.

We see American ingenuity and innovative in the cultural infrastructure of many communities and take great pride in serving the American people through our more than 4,000 associated organizations and individuals in all 50 states. Arts Presenters members bring performances to more than two million people each week, and have combined budgets in excess of \$2.5 billion annually, while the presenting and touring field serves more than six million people each week and has combined annual budgets of than \$9 billion.

I urge you to enhance and strengthen the performing arts in America by taking action in the areas mentioned in the following issue briefs, including:

- Increase the NEA budget to \$319.2 million, the FY 1992 peak budget level of \$176 million adjusted for inflation and population as a step toward providing a more appropriate level of artistic benefits to the American people;
- Increase funding for our national arts education programs through the U.S. Department of Education;
- Increase funding for international cultural exchange through the U.S. Department of State;
- Help ease burdensome delays in visa processing for foreign artists;
- Promote charitable giving to nonprofit organizations;
- Support changes to FCC regulations that will help protect the quality of natural, enhanced and amplified sound in the nation's performing arts venues and assembly halls.

The Association of Performing Arts Presenters is the national service organization for the field of arts presenting. Members represent the nation's leading performing arts centers; civic and university performance facilities; the full spectrum of artist agencies and managers; a growing roster of self-representing artists; and national consulting practices and vendors that service the field.

We need your help on Capitol Hill to ensure that the performing arts remain vital and accessible to all Americans. Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your support now and throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Sandra Gibson
President and CEO