



LEGISLATIVE NEWS ARCHIVE 2009

11-02-2009: President Obama appointed 25 members to the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, which works to initiate and support key programs of the federal cultural agencies and to recognize excellence in the fields of arts and humanities.

10-29-2009: Congress passed a \$12.5 million funding increase as part of the FY 2010 Interior Appropriations bill for both the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. This brings the budgets of the NEA and NEH to their highest funding levels in 16 years at \$167.5 million.

10-08-2009: President Obama issues the first ever official Presidential Proclamation declaring October as National Arts and Humanities Month.

09-24-2009: The full U.S. Senate approved the FY 2010 Interior Appropriations bill by a vote of 77-21, which included a proposed funding level for the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities at \$161.3 million. This number is in line with the Obama administration's \$6 million increase over the \$155 million FY 2009 appropriation, but is \$9 million below the House passed proposed funding level of \$170 million considered in June.

09-16-2009: The U.S. Senate voted on two amendments offered by Sen. Tom Coburn (R-OK) to the annual transportation appropriations bill. One amendment sought to prohibit any transportation spending on museums and the second amendment was designed to terminate the federal contribution to the Transportation Enhancement (TE) program, which is a significant funder of public art, museum, and design projects nationally. Both amendments were soundly defeated.

08-21-2009: Americans for the Arts launches a new web portal dedicated to promoting community service opportunities for arts groups, arts volunteers, and artists nationwide. Serve.artsusa.org is a place for volunteers in the arts to share stories and upload photos and

videos related to their volunteer experiences.

08-13-2009: Americans for the Arts and a coalition of 20 national arts organizations issue a statement to Congress urging legislators to support healthcare reforms that address critical issues to the nonprofit arts organizations at the state and local level, as well as individual artists across the country.

08-07-2009: The U.S. Senate confirmed Broadway producer Rocco Landesman to serve as the next National Endowment for the Arts chair and former Congressman Jim Leach to serve as National Endowment for the Humanities chair.

07-24-2009: The full U.S. House of Representatives passed the FY 2010 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill, including a \$2 million increase for the Arts in Education programs at the U.S. Department of Education. In addition, the legislation recommends \$1.059 billion for the Corporation for National and Community Service, which falls \$90 million below President Obama's request.

07-07-2009: The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) announced their direct grants as part of the \$50 million federal economic stimulus recovery package. The NEA will distribute \$29.775 million to 631 nonprofit arts groups nationwide. This is in addition to the 63 state and regional sub-grants previously awarded in April, totaling \$19.8 million.

06-26-2009: The U.S. House of Representatives passed by a vote of 254-173 the Interior Appropriations bill, which included a \$15 million increase for both the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for FY 2010. Currently funded at \$155 million, this increase would bring both agencies' budgets to \$170 million.

06-15-2009: For the first time in 11 years, the federal government released a national report card on achievement in the arts among 8th graders. This long-awaited report finds that since 1997, our nation's students have not made significant progress in developing their skills and knowledge in the arts. The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) in the Arts report is the only continuing, national measure of academic achievement in America's schools.

06-10-2009: The House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, which sets the initial funding level for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), approves a \$15 million increase for the NEA in its FY 2010 spending bill. Currently funded at \$155 million, this increase would bring the agency's budget to \$170 million.

05-13-2009: President Obama nominates Rocco Landesman, president of Jujamcyn Theaters, to serve as Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. The White House's official statement on his nomination noted that Landesman's career "has been a hybrid of commercial, philanthropic, and purely artistic engagements." Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert Lynch noted in a press statement, "I am excited to see that President Obama has made a bold choice in selecting Rocco Landesman as Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. His nomination represents an important opportunity to advance the mission of the NEA to provide access to the arts for all. As evidenced in his work as a theatrical producer, Landesman has an entrepreneurial spirit that will allow the NEA to spotlight the broad spectrum of the arts in America to the nation and to the world."

05-07-2009: President Obama releases his detailed FY 2010 budget request to Congress, beginning the yearly appropriations process for the nation's cultural agencies and programs, including the National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, Office of Museum Services, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and the Department of Education's Arts in Education programs. Americans for the Arts President & CEO Robert Lynch noted in a press statement, "The president's proposed funding of \$161 million would take the NEA to its highest funding level in 15 years and will help continue the upward trend of budgetary growth that Congress established several years ago."

- 5/8 – *Washington Post*: [National Gallery to Receive Emergency Funding](#)
-

04-21-2009: President Obama signs The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act (H.R. 1388), which reauthorizes the federal volunteer programs as administered through the Corporation for National Service. In addition to greatly expanding the number of service members, the legislation creates an "Education Corps...that identifies and meets unmet educational goals." Among the eligible activities outlined in the legislation is a program that calls for artists and/or musicians to promote community unity in low-income communities with citizens of all ages. This would be the most significant inclusion of the arts into national service to date.

04-03-2009: The Congressional Arts Caucus circulated "Dear Colleague" letters for the NEA and Arts Education, seeking \$176 million in NEA funding and \$53 million in funding for arts education at the U.S. Department of Education for FY 2010.

03-31-2009: Rep. Norm Dicks convenes the House Interior & Environment Appropriations Subcommittee for a special hearing on the arts entitled "The Arts = Jobs", marking Arts Advocacy Day. Artistic Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center Wynton Marsalis, GRAMMY®-nominated singer-songwriter Josh Groban, GRAMMY®-Award winning singer Linda Ronstadt, President and CEO of The Reinvestment Fund Jeremy Nowak, and Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert L. Lynch, testified at the hearing and emphasized the importance of developing strong public policies for the arts, appropriating increased public funding for the arts, and supporting arts workers.

03-31-2009: Americans for the Arts and 83 national organizations hosted the 2009 Arts Advocacy Day. Over 500 arts advocates from across held meetings with congressional offices. Artistic Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center Wynton Marsalis delivered the 22nd Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy at the Kennedy Center. Representative John Lewis was given the 2009 Congressional Arts Leadership Award. Selected press coverage from Arts Advocacy Day includes:

- 3/31–*Associated Press*: [Groban, Marsalis, Press Congress for Arts Funding](#)
 - 3/31–*U.S. News & World Report*: [Linda Ronstadt, Wynton Marsalis, and Josh Groban Pitch Congress](#)
-

03-26-2009: The House Education and Labor Committee held a hearing titled "The Economic and Employment Impact of the Arts and Music Industry," to examine how the economy is affecting jobs in the arts and music industries, and the role these industries play in communities across the country. This is the first in a series of hearings the Committee has announced it will hold this Spring on the impact of the creative industries and their vital role in our economy. Witnesses included Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert L. Lynch and Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs Director and Americans for the Arts Board Member Michael Spring.

03-16-2009: The Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report addressing declining access to music and arts education for public school students as a result of the No

Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The GAO report surveyed 50 state arts officials, interviewed officials in 8 school districts and 19 schools and reviewed existing research. One of the key recommendations from the GAO was that the U.S. Department of Education increase its collection of arts education data so that decreases in instructional time in the arts has occurred. Senators Chris Dodd (D-CT) and Lamar Alexander (R-TN), who requested the study, issued a joint press release that called this class time reduction “a disturbing trend.”

03-10-2009: Congress passes the FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act, which provides an increase of \$10 million (\$144.7 to \$155 million) to the budgets of both the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Arts in Education program at the U.S. Department of Education was increased from \$37.5 million to \$38.1 million and the Office of Museum Services went from \$31.27 million to \$35 million.

02-13-2009: The U.S. House of Representatives and Senate passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 with \$50 million in direct support for arts jobs through National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grants. The massive \$787 billion legislation is the result of reconciliation between the two chambers' versions of the stimulus legislation tasked with making major investments in the country's workforce. In addition to securing critical funding, congressional and grassroots advocates were able to successfully remove an onerous provision banning certain arts groups from receiving recovery funds they are eligible for in program areas other than the NEA. The amendment sponsored by Sen. Tom Coburn (R-OK) was passed in the Senate version of their bill and included exclusionary language for "museums, theaters, and arts centers." In reconciling the two chambers' differences between their bills, the amendment was dropped from the final legislation. Selected press coverage of Americans for the Arts and the economic recovery package includes:

- 2/5 – *The Boston Globe*: [Stimulus Funding for Arts Hits Nerve](#)
 - 2/13 – *Los Angeles Times*: [House Passes Stimulus Bill with \\$50 Million for Artists](#)
 - 2/16 – *New York Times*: [Saving Federal Arts Funds: Selling Culture as an Economic Force](#)
-

02-06-2009: The U.S. Senate, during their consideration of the economic recovery bill, approved an amendment offered by Sen. Tom Coburn (R-OK) by a wide vote margin of 73–24 that stated, “None of the amounts appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used for any casino or other gambling establishment, aquarium, zoo, golf course,

swimming pool, stadium, community park, museum, theater, art center, and highway beautification project.”

01-14-2009: The House Appropriations Committee released an \$825 billion economic recovery package. Included in the proposed bill is an infusion of \$50 million for the National Endowment for the Arts (in addition to its annual appropriations) to specifically preserve jobs in the nonprofit arts sector threatened by declines in philanthropic and other support. Americans for the Arts has released nine Recommendations for Economic Recovery & the Arts to help nonprofit and governmental arts groups as well as individual artists during this economic downturn. Selected press coverage of the economic recovery package and Americans for the Arts Recommendations:

- 1/14–*Washington Post*: [Quincy Jones Leads Chorus Urging a Cabinet-Level Arts Czar](#)
- 1/14–*Los Angeles Times*: [Behind the Curtain of Obama's Arts Policy](#)
- 1/16–*NPR*: [Does U.S. Need a Culture Czar](#)