



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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Americans for the Arts Responds to House Subcommittee Approval of \$160 Million in Funding for Arts and Culture in FY 2008

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert L. Lynch gave the following statement on the approval of \$160 million in funding for the National Endowment for the Arts:

“Yesterday the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee that provides funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) approved a \$35 million increase for the NEA in its FY 2008 spending bill. This increase is a strong step in the right direction and I commend Subcommittee Chairman Norm Dicks (D-WA) for taking it.

If this funding level is maintained by the Senate and signed into law by President Bush it will represent the largest increase ever in NEA history. The agency, currently funded at \$124.4 million, has seen increases of only under three percent for the last several years.

Earlier this year, Americans for the Arts called on Congress to restore full funding to the NEA at its FY 1992 level of \$176 million, which spurred significant economic growth, artistic achievement, and accessibility to cultural organizations across the nation. According to Americans for the Arts’ study *Arts & Economic Prosperity III*, the nonprofit arts industry generates \$166.2 billion in economic activity annually for the U.S. economy, supports 5.7 million full-time jobs, and returns \$12.6 billion in income tax revenue back to the federal government.

In his first public action on arts issues as chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior, Rep. Dicks hosted a Congressional hearing Role of the Arts in Creativity and Innovation, in conjunction with Arts Advocacy Day on March 13, 2007. It was the first hearing in more than 12 years held on the importance of investing in the arts.

Rep. Dicks invited Americans for the Arts to organize witnesses to give official testimony. The six witnesses included President and CEO of Americans for the Arts Robert Lynch, Artistic Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center Wynton Marsalis, entrepreneur and arts philanthropist Sheila C. Johnson, corporate executive and arts patron James Raisbeck, Mayor of Providence David Cicilline, and film actor and arts education advocate Chris Klein.

Also leading this effort to restore NEA funding in the House are Congressional Arts Caucus Co-Chairs Louise Slaughter (D-NY) and Chris Shays (R-CT) both of whom appeared before the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee at the public witness hearing to provide testimony supporting a budget increase."

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

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