



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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National Arts Leaders Call on Congress to Support Arts Workers

WASHINGTON, D.C. — This morning Americans for the Arts, the leading nonprofit for advancing the arts in America, will present testimony before the House Education and Labor Committee. The Congressional hearing, titled “The Economic and Employment Impact of the Arts and Music Industry” and hosted by committee chairman Rep. George Miller (D-CA), will address the economic and employment impact of the arts and music industry. Witnesses include:

- **Robert L. Lynch** – President and CEO of Americans for the Arts
- **Michael Spring** – Director, Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs
- **Rep. Louise Slaughter** (D-NY) – Congressional Arts Caucus co-chair

A live Webcast of the hearing will begin at 10 am.

Americans for the Arts works to sustain the health of the arts field and gain momentum so that the arts can grow and prosper in the 21st century. However, the current recession has hit the nonprofit arts sector hard. The stock market decline slashed corporate, foundation, and individual charitable gifts. The resulting loss of tax revenue to states and cities has triggered severe cuts in public support for the arts. The lack of consumer income is having an impact on ticket sales to cultural events. And according to the National Endowment for the Arts, artists are unemployed at twice the rate of professional workers and the unemployment rates for artists have risen more rapidly than for U.S. workers as a whole.

“The arts are part of this nation’s economy and they need support from Congress to help prevent further job loss and reduction of cultural programming and educational opportunities to the communities they serve,” said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. “This year alone, more than 10 percent of the nation’s 100,000 nonprofit arts organizations are at risk of closing this year at the loss of thousands of jobs.”

Nonprofit arts organizations and their audiences generate annually \$166.2 billion in U.S. economic activity, support 5.7 million jobs, and provide nearly \$30 billion in government

revenue. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates there are 2.2 million working artists in America.

Arts-centric jobs are core to building a new kind of workforce to compete in the 21st century global economy—one that is skilled in innovation, design, and communications. Last year's Ready to Innovate report issued by The Conference Board, which serves the largest U.S. businesses, states that "it is clear that the arts—music, creative writing, drawing, dance—provide skills sought by employers of the third millennium."

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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