



SOCIETY FOR THE ARTS IN HEALTHCARE®

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March 31, 2009

Dear Member of Congress:

Thank you for the increased funding for the National Endowment for the Arts. Recognizing the economic pressures on our country; however, it is critical to continue the momentum and support the arts, especially as they relate to healthcare.

Almost every American will experience a health issue that needs to be addressed by our healthcare system sometime during their lifetime. The effects of the arts used as an integral part of healthcare are profound, significantly affecting patient care and cost savings as well as safety and healthy environments. In our 2004 and 2007 landmark studies of over 2,000 healthcare institutions, almost half reported using arts programming to create healing environments, support patients' physical, mental, and emotional recovery, communicate health information, reduce healthcare costs, and foster positive working conditions.

On behalf of the Society for the Arts in Healthcare, a National Co-sponsor of Arts Advocacy Day 2009, I urge you to support arts and health by:

- Requesting a **Government Accountability Office study** to assess the current status of federal support of arts in healthcare programs to improve the quality of healthcare services.
- Funding **research to increase access to arts in healthcare programs** addressing older Americans, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, autism, and others through federal health programs.
- Ensuring that **national healthcare insurance reform** proposals include artists and other creative occupations currently excluded from employer-based insurance plans.
- Increasing **funding to the National Endowment for the Arts** to \$200 million for the creation, preservation, and presentation of the arts in America, including arts in healthcare.
- Legislation to **make permanent the IRA Charitable Rollover provision**, allowing individuals to roll funds from their IRA accounts to charities, which will contribute to the well-being of arts in healthcare programming and other non-profit efforts that serve the public.

Founded in 1991, the **Society for the Arts in Healthcare** is a Washington, DC-based non-profit membership organization dedicated to advancing the arts as integral to healthcare. Funded in part by the National Endowment of the Arts and Johnson & Johnson, the Society provides program and professional development support through resources and information, consulting services, and the convening of conferences and symposia to a wide range of arts and healthcare institutions. With over 1,700 members from 49 states and 13 countries, our membership represents diverse fields: healthcare decision makers, doctors, nurses, architects, interior designers, researchers, and the artistic community.

Thank you for your leadership and support of the growth of arts in healthcare in our country.

Sincerely,

Anita B. Boles
Executive Director

Dedicated to advancing the arts as integral to healthcare