

Statement from National Nonprofit Arts Organizations in Support of Comprehensive Healthcare Reform

August 12, 2009

As national arts service organizations representing thousands of nonprofit arts organizations at the state and local level as well as serving thousands of individual artists across the country, we call on Congress to pass a health care reform bill.

The current economic crisis has affected the cultural sector as dramatically as it has the millions of unemployed and uninsured Americans. Like others who have fallen through the cracks of the current system, many in the cultural workforce work independently or operate in nontraditional employment relationships, leaving them locked out of group healthcare coverage options. Additionally, soaring health care costs are consuming the ever decreasing budgets of nonprofit arts organizations hit hard by today's economic recession. The time for reform that delivers high quality and affordable health care for businesses and individuals is now. We call on Congress to pass:

- A health care reform bill that will create a public health insurance option for individual artists, especially the uninsured, and create better choices for affordable access to universal health coverage without being denied because of pre-existing conditions.
- A health care reform bill that will help financially-strapped nonprofit arts organizations reduce the skyrocketing health insurance costs to cover their employees without cuts to existing benefits and staff while the economy recovers. These new cost-savings could also enable nonprofit arts organizations to produce and present more programs to serve their communities.
- A health care reform bill that will enable smaller nonprofit and unincorporated arts groups to afford to cover part and full-time employees for the first time.
- A health care reform bill that will support arts in healthcare programs, which have shown to be effective methods of prevention and patient care.

There is little time to waste as a broken system continues to leave far too many behind and adds trillions to our national debt. Millions of cultural workers stand ready to assist our leaders with solutions that protect all Americans and its creative sector with guaranteed universal insurance coverage deserving of the wealthiest nation in the world.

Americans for the Arts
Alliance of Artists Communities
American Art Therapy Association
American Association of Community Theatre
American Dance Therapy Association
American Music Therapy Association
Americans for the Arts Action Fund
Arts & Business Council
Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design
Association of Writers & Writing Programs
Business Committee for the Arts

Fractured Atlas
Grantmakers in the Arts
Literary Network
National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture
National Center for Creative Aging
National Dance Association
National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts
Society for Arts in Healthcare
Theatre Communications Group
VSA arts