



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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Arts Advocacy Day 2009 - Congressional Hearing on Arts Funding Among Highlights

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Americans for the Arts, in conjunction with the Congressional Arts Caucus and 83 national co-sponsors, celebrated Arts Advocacy Day 2009 yesterday as more than 500 arts advocates from across the nation met with their representatives on Capitol Hill, calling on them to support arts-friendly legislation and policies. A highlight of the day was a Congressional hearing entitled “The Arts = Jobs” hosted by Rep. Norm Dicks (D-WA), Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior.

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.

In its largest gathering yet, the 22nd annual Arts Advocacy Day brought together a broad cross section of America’s cultural and civic organizations, along with hundreds of grassroots advocates from across the country. Arts advocacy has hit its stride with the 111th Congress and Obama Administration, as lawmakers continued to demonstrate a clear understanding of how the arts are essential to the growth of the U.S. economy and are bringing the arts to forefront of the national dialogue.

In these meetings, advocates provided Members of Congress with copies of the 2009 Congressional Arts Handbook, which includes information on important issues affecting the arts.

The Arts Advocacy Day call to action included:

Promote Creativity and Public Access to the Arts through Support for the National

Endowment for the Arts

Advocates urged Congress to support a budget of \$200 million for the NEA in the FY10 Interior Appropriations bill to restore funding for the creation, preservation, and presentation of the arts in America through the NEA's core programs—Access to Artistic Excellence, Challenge America: Reaching Every Community, Federal/State Partnerships, and Learning in the Arts.

Recognize the Value of the Arts and Creative Industries in Stimulating the Economy

Advocates urged that as Congress considers legislation investing in the country's workforce and economy that the creative industries are recognized as members of the business community and supported through specific provisions, including: boost arts projects in Community Development Block Grants, include cultural planning through the Economic Development Administration, and make human capital investments in arts job training.

Develop Access to Arts Education for All Students through Arts Education Funding and Research through the U.S. Department of Education

Congress was urged to allocate \$53 million for the Arts in Education programs in the FY10 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. They suggested that the U.S. Department of Education should be required to produce timely and comprehensive reports on the status of arts education in America's public schools, when implementing the Fast Response Statistical Survey and the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Also on the legislative agenda were asks covering national service, arts education, tax policy, cultural diplomacy, and healthcare issues:

- Advocates urged their Senators to support the Serve America Act.
- Advocates asked Congress to ensure that all American students reap the benefits of a full, comprehensive education in the arts when it reauthorizes No Child Left Behind.
- Members of Congress were encouraged to co-sponsor the IRA Charitable Rollover provision, allowing individuals to roll funds from their Individual Retirement Accounts to charity.
- Supporting public broadcasting through federal funds distributed by The Corporation for Public Broadcasting.
- Supporting a significant budget increase for the National Endowment for the Humanities in the FY10 Interior Appropriations bill.
- Supporting an appropriation of \$50 million for the Office of Museum Services within IMLS to promote lifelong learning and protecting our national heritage.
- Advocates recommended increasing funding by \$10 million for the Cultural Programs Division of the State Department's Office of Citizen Exchanges in the FY10 State and Foreign Operations appropriations bill.
- Improving the visa process for foreign guest artists.
- Protecting 'White Spaces' for the performing arts.

- Advocates requested that the Government Accountability Office conduct a study to assess the current status of federal support of creative arts in healthcare programs to improve the quality of healthcare services.

Kicking off Arts Advocacy Day on Tuesday morning was the Congressional Arts Breakfast on Capitol Hill, organized by Americans for the Arts in conjunction with the Congressional Arts Caucus. At the breakfast, Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors jointly presented the 2009 National Award for Congressional Arts Leadership to Rep. John Lewis (D-GA). Speakers at the breakfast included:

- Josh Groban, GRAMMY®-nominated singer-songwriter
- Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY), Congressional Arts Caucus Co-Chair
- Rep. Todd Platts (R-PA), Congressional Arts Caucus Co-Chair
- Rep. Norm Dicks (D-WA)
- Rep. John Lewis (D-GA)
- Rep. Dennis Moore (D-KS)
- Rep. John Yarmuth (D-KY)
- Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY)
- Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM)
- Robert L. Lynch, Americans for the Arts, President and CEO

On the eve of Arts Advocacy Day, Wynton Marsalis, World-renowned trumpeter, composer, Artistic Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center, delivered the 22nd Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts & Public Policy. This leading national forum for arts policy, served as an opportunity for public discourse at the highest levels on the importance of the arts and culture to our nation's well-being. In his engaging and moving lecture, titled "The Ballad of the American Arts," Wynton Marsalis addressed the essential value of culture in the recalibration of American identity. A transcript of the lecture and photos are available upon request.

"Our arts demand and deserve that we recognize the life we have lived on this land together. In this time, we need to be educated in who we are, and with the arts, education extends far outside the classroom," said Marsalis.

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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