Dear Creative Industry Leader,

At Arts Advocacy Day in March, U.S. Senator Tom Udall (D-NM) reintroduced legislation to promote the arts and cultural industries and strengthen the creative economy. U.S. Representative Debbie Dingell (D-MI) also introduced a companion bill in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy (CREATE) Act, is unparalleled in its commitment to supporting artists and the nation’s creative entrepreneurs. Americans for the Arts is proud to have played a role in the legislation’s formation.

The CREATE Act aims to more thoroughly serve the people, places, and programs that make our nation’s creative economy prosper in all its cultural, social, and commercial forms. Americans for the Arts is embarking on a multi-year process to build support among Members of Congress for this groundbreaking bill at the intersection of art and enterprise, and invites you to join our efforts.

This sweeping legislation expands on the research of numerous economic studies, such as Americans for the Arts’ Arts and Economic Prosperity, our Creative Industries maps. The CREATE Act Issue Brief, a statement drafted by Americans for the Arts and 88 national arts organizations, outlines how the bill’s provisions would help our federal government better invest in our nation’s workforce and creative economy.

Through minor adjustments to existing federal programs, the legislation takes steps to better invest in our country’s workforce and creative industries, while empowering the entrepreneurial spirit of artists and encouraging their role as contributors to the small business community. Primarily, the bill aims to support the people who comprise the creative economy—artists and creative entrepreneurs—by:

- Expanding programs at the Small Business Administration (SBA) to increase microloans, business loans, and technical assistance for artists and entrepreneurs in the arts;
- Ensuring access to FEMA’s disaster relief assistance for artists impacted by natural disasters;

The CREATE Act supports creative community development, improving the places each of us calls home through provisions including:

- Requiring the Economic Development Administration (EDA) ensure that traditional economic development tools, such as incubators and grant programs, support the creative economy throughout the country;
- Expanding the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development Administration to include arts-focused economic development;
- Adding a new priority to the Housing & Community Development Act to include arts-based community development and creative placemaking;
- Creating an Artist Corps to increase national service through the arts, as called for in the Serve America Act.
The CREATE Act seeks to amend and enhance federal regulations surrounding the creative economy by:

- Improving the visa processing time for foreign guest artists and U.S. nonprofit arts organizations; and
- Developing a model to promote the creative arts in local economic initiatives, such as cultural district planning.

Our recent Americans for the Arts/Ipsos survey reveals that the majority of Americans see the importance of the arts and culture in their communities nationwide. The CREATE Act can directly support half of the top 12 priorities that Americans identified as being most deserving of government funding, such as funding individuals to make art; providing art in parks, downtown areas and public places; and increasing tourism throughout the United States. Together, with your help, we can amplify the public’s broad support of the arts to secure congressional support of the CREATE Act.

I am writing to formally invite you and your organization to join Americans for the Arts in taking these steps to support the CREATE Act. Your involvement does make an impact and I hope that you will consider joining the movement behind this bill.

- In order to track further CREATE Act developments, click here to join the CREATE Act coalition listserv.
- Learn more about the bill and our outreach efforts on the CREATE Act webpage
- Lastly, please take two minutes to contact your U.S. Senators and Members of Congress to co-sponsor the CREATE Act!

If you have any questions, please contact Lauren Cohen at 202.371.2830 or lcohen@artsusa.org.

Sincerely,

Narric Rome
Vice President of Government Affairs