

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 1, 2019

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
2007 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Joyce
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment
and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman McCollum and Ranking Member Joyce,

We thank the Subcommittee for its steadfast bipartisan support of our federal cultural agencies. In that tradition, we respectfully request a funding level of at least \$167.5 million for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in the Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) Interior Appropriations bill.

From the work of nonprofit arts organizations to the impact of cultural tourism, the arts are a powerful force in our communities. As the nation's largest single funder of the nonprofit arts sector, the NEA expands opportunities for Americans to engage with the arts in every state and district, supporting more than 2,400 projects in 2018. This grantmaking often targets rural and underserved areas that would not otherwise have robust access to the cultural, educational, and economic benefits of the arts.

Few other federal investments have such a widespread impact and multiplying effect as those of the NEA, nor such a significant return on investment. Every \$1 spent on direct grants leverages up to \$9 in private and other public funds, generating more than \$500 million in matching support. Moreover, forty percent of NEA's grant-making budget is re-granted through state arts agencies and regional arts organizations. Private support cannot match the leveraging role of government cultural funding. The requested funding level represents a renewed investment that leveraging power, the effects of which will be felt across the country.

The NEA is also at the forefront of the effort to build a national network of care for our injured service members, whether they are active duty or veterans, in medical treatment or transitioning back home to their bases and communities. The Creative Forces Military Healing Arts Network focuses support for service members and veterans who have been diagnosed with traumatic brain injury (TBI) and psychological health conditions. This program, expanded in 2017, now includes 11 clinical sites across the country and a telehealth program for patients in rural and remote areas. It represents an important partnership between the NEA, the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, and state local community arts organizations, and is committed to advancing research and building a national network of care in both clinical and community settings benefiting our injured service members, veterans, and their families.

Additionally, the requested funding would allow the NEA maintain its slate of enormously successful national programs, including *The Big Read*, *Blue Star Museums*, *The Mayors' Institute on City Design*, *The Citizens Institute on Rural Design*, *Shakespeare in American Communities*, and *Poetry Out Loud*.

The arts also play a significant role in equalizing educational opportunities. Students with an education rich in the arts have higher GPAs and standardized test scores and lower drop-out rates. The NEA's education programs have helped to sustain support in local communities for arts education, which has been proven to help close the education achievement gap and also benefit children and adults in many important ways throughout their lives.

We strongly urge you to support funding level of at least \$167.5 million for NEA in the Fiscal Year 2020 Interior Appropriations bill. By approving this level of funding, you will maintain the NEA's ability to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to benefit from the arts. We appreciate your attention to this request, and hope we can count on your continued support.

Sincerely,



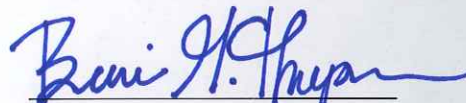
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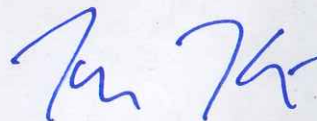
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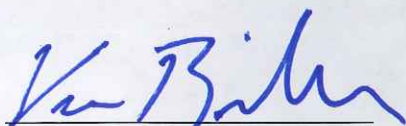
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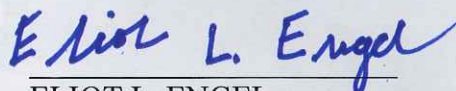
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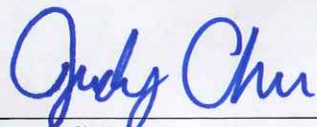
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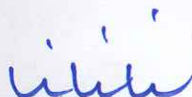
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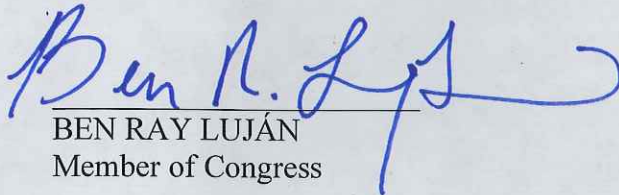
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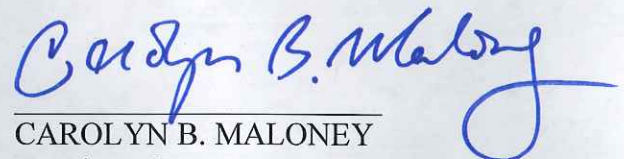
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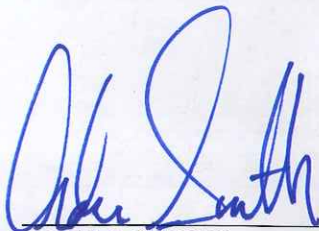
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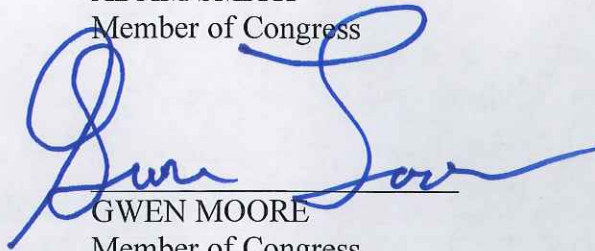
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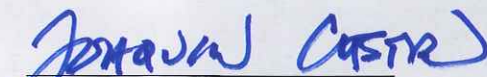
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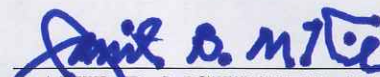
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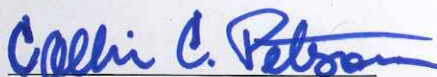
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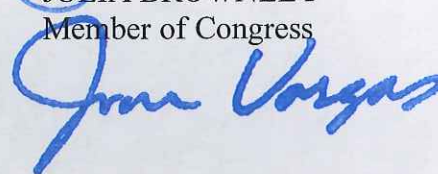
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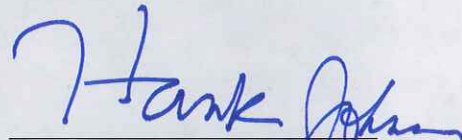
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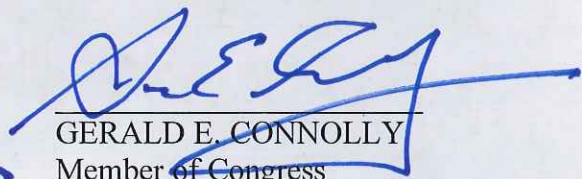
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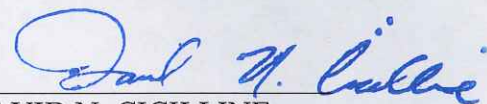
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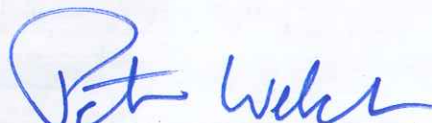
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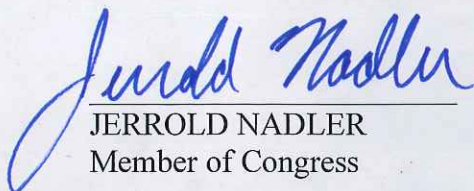
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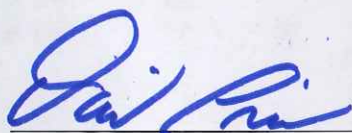
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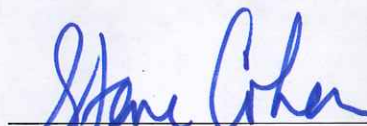
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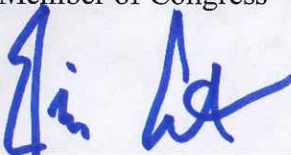
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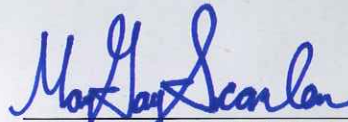
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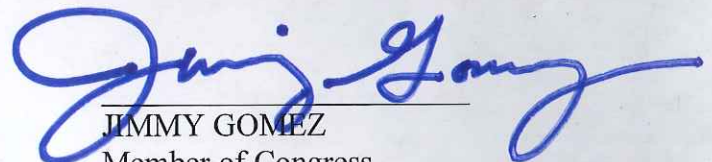
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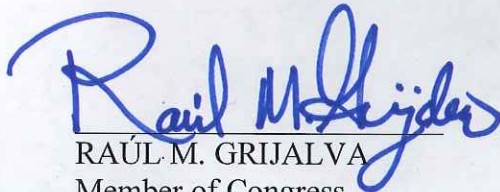
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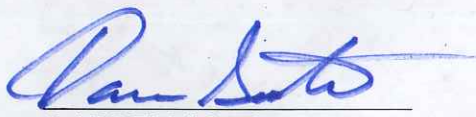

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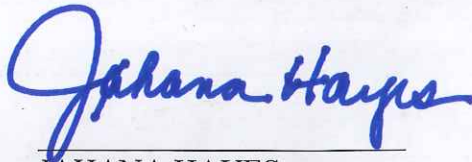

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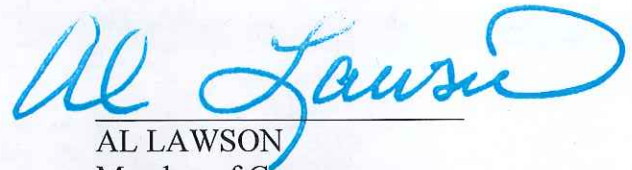

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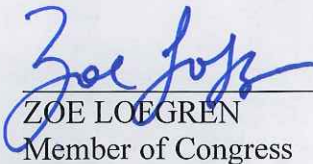

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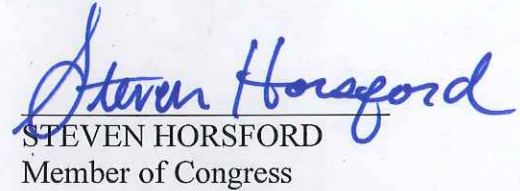
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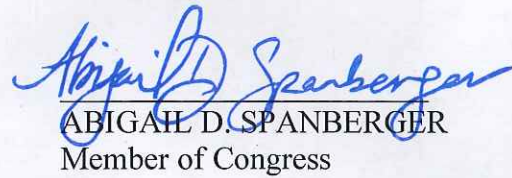
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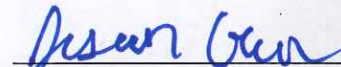
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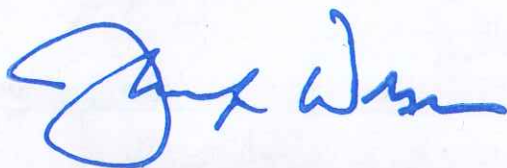
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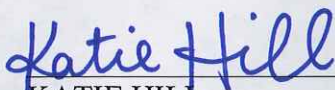
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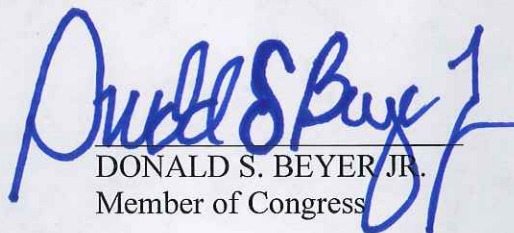
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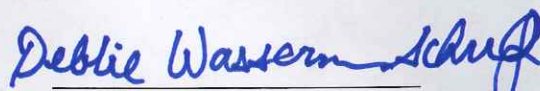
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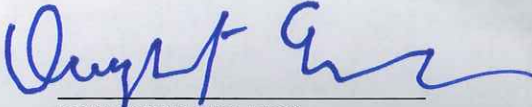
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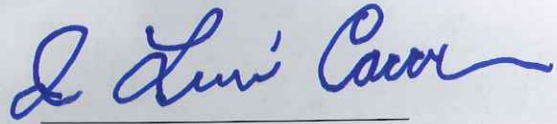
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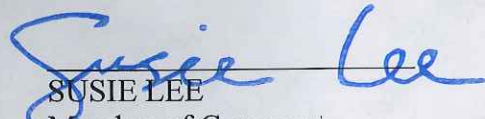
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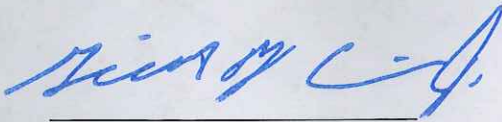
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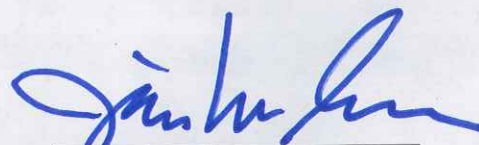


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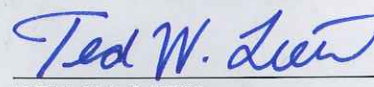


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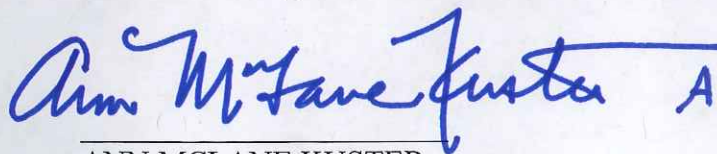

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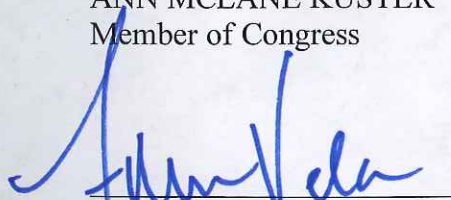

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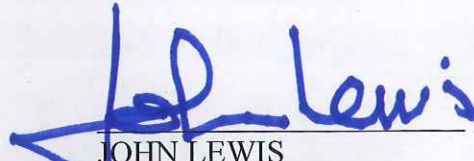

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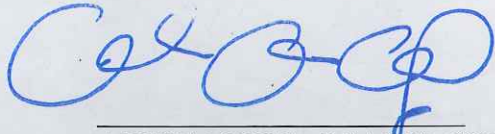

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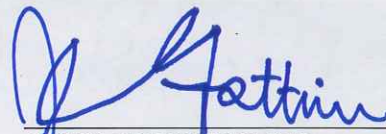
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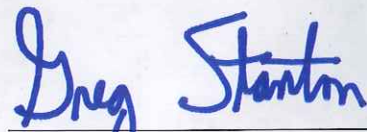
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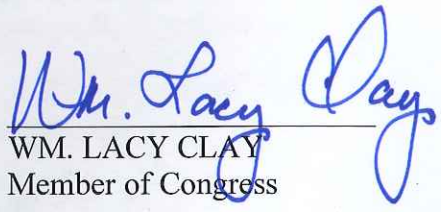
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