February 11, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
Office of the Speaker  
H-232, the Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Senate Majority Leader  
Office of the Majority Leader  
S-221, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Obey  
Chairman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
H-218, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S-131, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Rangel  
Chairman  
House Committee on Ways & Means  
1102 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Max Baucus  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Finance  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Henry Waxman  
Chairman  
House Committee on Energy & Commerce  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Reid, Chairmen Obey, Rangel, Waxman, Inouye and Baucus:

As you meet with fellow conferees to reconcile the House- and Senate-passed economic recovery packages, I urge you to include $50 million for the National Endowment for the Arts as passed in H.R. 1, the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, in the conference report.

America's overall nonprofit arts and culture industry generates $166.2 billion economic activity every year. The national impact of this activity is significant, supporting 5.7 million jobs and generating $29.6 billion in government revenue - $12.6 billion of which is federal.
Moreover, investing in the NEA is a proven way to stimulate local and regional economies. The NEA ensures that their investments in the arts reach communities throughout the country. In fact, in 2007 the NEA awarded 2,234 grants totaling $100,712,053 in 435 congressional districts. Moreover, every $1 of NEA spending leverages $7 in additional support through local, state and private donations. No other federal program provides such an incredible return on our investment.

The arts and culture industry creates jobs, attracts investments, generates tax revenues, and invigorates communities through tourism and consumer purchases. That is why both the National Governor’s Association and the U.S. Conference of Mayors agree that investing in arts and culture-related industries provide important economic benefits to local and regional economies.

I have included a summary that indicates how many jobs the creative economy supports in your district, as well as talking points you may wish to use while meeting with your fellow conferees to defend the NEA funding.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress