The Honorable Norm Dicks
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Dicks and Ranking Member Simpson:

We urge you to support a funding level of $176 million for the National Endowment for the Arts in the Fiscal Year 2010 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill to support the NEA’s core mission to bring the arts to every American. The NEA was last funded at this amount in 1992, and has never recovered from a 40 percent budget cut in FY 1996.

Thanks to your leadership, the NEA received $155 million in FY09 funding. This funding will help the NEA continue running its extremely successful programs, including Access to Artistic Excellence, the Big Read, Challenge America, Learning in the Arts and Federal/State Partnerships. In FY 2008, the NEA awarded nearly $122 million of appropriated funds through more than 2,200 grants reaching all 435 congressional districts. Each NEA grant leverages at least seven dollars from other state, local, and private sources. Few other federal investments have such a widespread impact and magnifying effect across the entire nation.

The NEA contributes to the development and economic growth of communities nationwide. Each year, the arts industry generates $166.2 billion in economic activity, and provides 5.7 million full-time jobs. At the same time, this industry returns $12.6 billion to the federal government in income taxes. The National Governor’s Association and the U.S. Conference of Mayors recognize the enormous value of the arts in our communities and regional economies. Arts and culture-related industries provide direct economic benefits to states and communities: they create jobs, attract investments, generate tax revenues, and stimulate local economies through tourism and consumer purchases. America’s arts and entertainment are also leading exports, with estimates of more than $30 billion annually in overseas sales. From the work of nonprofit arts agencies to the impact of cultural tourism, the creative sector is important to state economies all across the country.

The NEA supports life-long learning in the arts. 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. Students with an education rich in the arts have better grade point
averages in core academic subjects, score better on standardized tests, and have lower drop-out rates than students without arts education.

We strongly urge you to increase NEA funding to $176 million in the FY 2010 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill. By approving this increase, you will strengthen 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,

Louise M. Slaughter
Tammy Baldwin
Jerrold Nadler

Todd Platts
Will L. Robeson
J. Jim McMillan
Jim Matheson
Wm. Lacy Clay
Elise DeL鄭cher
Lucy L. McRight
Gregg Wm. Muel
C. James DAVIS
Carolyn B. Maloney
Kim M. McGee
Jim McFerrin
Mick Simpson
Neil Deery
Jim Sangervin
Paul Stoner
John Hill
Mary Jo Filion
Alice & Hastings
Callie Robinson
Susan A. Davis
Hank Johnson

Mary C. Castor
Doris O. Matsai
Pete Stark
Bob A. Brady
Rush Holt
Dave Loebe
D. C. Watts
Jane Schakel
J. V. W.
Bob Etheridge
Paul Shink
FY10 National Endowment for the Arts Signatories

1. Slaughter, Louise
2. Platts, Todd Russell
3. Tauscher, Ellen O.
4. Pascrell, Bill Jr.
5. Baldwin, Tammy
6. Kucinich, Dennis
7. Ross, Mike
8. Matheson, Jim
9. Filner, Bob
11. Clay, Wm. Lacy
12. Crowley, Joseph
13. Green, Gene
14. Schakowsky, Janice D.
15. Rangel, Charles B.
16. Hastings, Alcee L.
17. Meeks, Gregory W.
18. DeGette, Diana
19. Nadler, Jerrold
20. Maloney, Carolyn
21. Dingell, John
22. Payne, Donald
23. Rahall, Nick J.
24. Watt, Mel
25. Blumenauer, Earl
26. Woolsey, Lynn C.
27. Wexler, Robert
28. Berman, Howard L.
29. Peterson, Collin C.
30. Waxman, Henry
31. Ehlers, Vernon J.
32. Engel, Eliot
33. Davis, Danny K.
34. Kildee, Dale E.
35. Moore, Dennis
36. Michaud, Michael
37. Walz, Timothy J.
38. Sutton, Betty
39. Van Hollen, Chris
40. Tsongas, Niki
41. Etheridge, Bob
42. Davis, Susan
43. Hirono, Mazie K.
44. Christensen, Donna M.
45. Abercrombie, Neil
46. Grijalva, Raul M.
47. Capuano, Michael E.
48. Spratt, Jr., John M.
49. Hodes, Paul
50. Kilroy, Mary Jo
51. Loeb, David
52. Hall, John
53. Holt, Rush
54. Johnson, Henry C. "Hank"
55. Miller, Brad
56. Farr, Sam
57. Capps, Lois
58. Pingree, Chellie
59. McDermott, Jim
60. Cleaver, Emanuel
61. McGovern, James P.
62. Yarmuth, John
63. Sarbanes, John
64. Murphy, Christopher
65. Berkley, Shelley
66. Doyle, Mike
67. McMahon, Michael E.
68. Castor, Kathy
69. Stark, Fortney Pete
70. Thompson, Mike
71. Matsui, Doris
72. Brady, Robert
73. Doggett, Lloyd
74. Tonko, Paul
75. Lance, Leonard
76. Langevin, James R.
77. Reichert, David G.