



## NEWS AND INFORMATION

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Americans for the Arts Applauds Major Funding Increase to National Endowment for the Arts**

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert L. Lynch gave the following statement on the preliminary Congressional approval of \$144.7 million in funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA):

“This week Congress is taking steps to approve a \$20 million increase for the National Endowment for the Arts in its FY 2008 Omnibus appropriations bill. I applaud House Subcommittee Chairman Norm Dicks (D-WA) in leading the fight for this significant increase.

If this funding level is maintained by the Senate and signed into law by President Bush, it will represent the largest increase in 24 years. The agency, currently funded at \$124.4 million has seen increases of under 3 percent for the last several years.

The NEA funding allocates specific amounts for the following programs: Direct Grants, National Initiative: American Masterpieces, State Partnerships, and Challenge America. While this budget will increase funding to direct grants to arts organizations, we will continue to work with our Congressional supporters to increase funding for the Challenge America program, a fund that supports artistic programs that reach underserved populations throughout the country. Challenge America received a slight cut while most of the program funding was directed to national initiatives.

Our cause was championed earlier this year by Chairman Dicks as he held, on Arts Advocacy Day, the first hearing on arts funding in 12 years. Americans for the Arts was proud to be called on by Chairman Dicks to organize the hearing and present the panel of witnesses to testify in support of a significant increase to the NEA.”

***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](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org).*

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