



## NEWS AND INFORMATION

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Congressional Arts Award Presented to Sen. Patrick Leahy**

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Americans for the Arts, the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America, in conjunction with the United States Conference of Mayors, the national organization representing mayors' and cities' interests, today presented the 2008 National Award for Congressional Arts Leadership to Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT). The award, which recognizes distinguished service on behalf of the arts, was presented at the 2008 Congressional Arts Breakfast on Capitol Hill. The breakfast, organized jointly with the Congressional Arts Caucus, kicks off Arts Advocacy Day.

Senator Leahy was selected for the Congressional Arts Leadership Award for his strong commitment to the arts. As the lead sponsor of the Artist-Museum Partnership Act (S. 548), Leahy champions legislation that would allow artists to claim a fair-market value tax deduction when donating their work for the public to enjoy. He has also consistently led in supporting the arts as a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, which handles funding for the National Endowment for the Arts. As chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Leahy also has long led on copyright and intellectual property issues important to artists. An artist himself, Leahy is an avid and accomplished photographer whose photos have been featured in national publications and exhibited in galleries throughout Vermont.

"Patrick Leahy is a true leader in support for the arts in this country," said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "His dedication and hard work for the arts in the Senate is invaluable not only to his home state but to citizens nationwide."

The National Award for Congressional Arts Leadership is part of a series of Public Leadership in the Arts Awards given annually by Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors since 1997.

"Each year, we recognize a Congressional leader for his or her support of the arts," stated Tom Cochran, executive director and CEO of The U.S. Conference of Mayors. "Senator Leahy truly deserves this award for his tireless work on placing the arts high on our national agenda."

Previous recipients of the National Award for Congressional Arts Leadership include Rep. Betty McCollum (2007), Rep. Jim Leach of Iowa (2006), Rep. Christopher Shays of Connecticut (2005), Rep. David Obey of Wisconsin (2004), Sen. Thad Cochran of Mississippi (2003), Rep. Steve Horn of California (2002), Rep. Norm Dicks of Washington (2001), Sen. Robert Bennett of Utah and Rep. Nancy Johnson of Connecticut (2000), Sen. Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts and Rep. Mike Castle of Delaware (1999), Sen. Slade Gorton of Washington and Rep. Louise Slaughter of New York (1998), and Sen. James Jeffords of Vermont and Rep. Rick Lazio of New York (1997).

**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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