



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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Coalition of Arts Groups Issue Urgent Call to Congress for Healthcare Reform

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Americans for the Arts, the nation's leading nonprofit for advancing the Arts, and a coalition of 20 national arts organizations, together are calling on Congress to fully recognize the rights of individual artists and arts groups in the healthcare reform debate. The economic crisis has affected the cultural sector as dramatically as it has the millions of unemployed and uninsured Americans. Many in the cultural workforce, including those in the visual and performing arts, work independently or operate in nontraditional employment relationships, leaving them locked out of group healthcare coverage options. Additionally, soaring healthcare costs are consuming the sharply decreasing budgets of nonprofit arts organizations that have been hit hard by today's challenging economic climate.

"Now is the time for those in the arts community to join together and build momentum for passage of a comprehensive healthcare reform bill," said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "More than two million arts workers are calling on Congress to pass legislation that will provide all Americans and its cultural workforce with guaranteed universal health insurance coverage. We have the solutions, Congress must listen."

Statement from National Nonprofit Arts Organizations in Support of Comprehensive Healthcare Reform

As national arts service organizations representing thousands of nonprofit arts organizations at the state and local level as well as serving thousands of individual artists across the country, we call on Congress to pass a health care reform bill. The current economic crisis has affected the cultural sector as dramatically as it has the millions of unemployed and uninsured Americans. Like others who have fallen through the cracks of the current system, many in the cultural workforce work independently or operate in nontraditional employment relationships, leaving them locked out of group healthcare coverage options.

Additionally, soaring health care costs are consuming the ever decreasing budgets of nonprofit arts organizations hit hard by today's economic recession. The time for reform that

delivers high quality and affordable health care for businesses and individuals is now. We call on Congress to pass:

- A healthcare reform bill that will create a public health insurance option for individual artists, especially the uninsured, and create better choices for affordable access to universal health coverage without being denied because of pre-existing conditions.
- A healthcare reform bill that will help financially-strapped nonprofit arts organization reduce the skyrocketing health insurance costs to cover their employees without cuts to existing benefits and staff while the economy recovers. These new cost-savings could also enable nonprofit arts organizations to produce and present more programs to serve their communities.
- A healthcare reform bill that will enable smaller nonprofit and unincorporated arts groups to afford to cover part and full-time employees for the first time.
- A healthcare reform bill that will support arts in healthcare programs, which have shown to be effective methods of prevention and patient care.

There is little time to waste as a broken system continues to leave far too many behind and adds trillions to our national debt. Millions of cultural workers stand ready to assist our leaders with solutions that protect all Americans and its creative sector with guaranteed universal insurance coverage deserving of the wealthiest nation in the world.

Americans for the Arts
Alliance of Artists Communities
American Art Therapy Association
American Association of Community Theatre
American Dance Therapy Association
American Music Therapy Association
Americans for the Arts Action Fund
Arts & Business Council
Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design
Association of Writers & Writing Programs
Business Committee for the Arts
Fractured Atlas
Grantmakers in the Arts
Literary N Network etwork
National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture
National Center for Creative Aging
National Dance Association
National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts
Society for Arts in Healthcare

Theatre Communications Group
VSA arts

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.

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