



## NEWS AND INFORMATION

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Americans for the Arts and the United States Conference of Mayors Present 2004 National Award for Congressional Arts Leadership to U.S. Representative David Obey**

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, announced today that the recipient of their 2004 National Award for Congressional Arts Leadership will be U.S. Representative David R. Obey (D-WI). The award, which recognizes distinguished service on behalf of the arts, will be presented at a Congressional Arts Reception on Capitol Hill on Tuesday, March 30. The Reception, organized jointly with the Congressional Arts Caucus, kicks off Arts Advocacy Day, March 31.

Congressman Obey has been a staunch supporter of the arts on Capitol Hill, leading numerous floor debates to defend the federal government's role in nurturing America's creativity. He has maintained a longstanding commitment to the arts and works strategically with the chairs of the Congressional Arts Caucus to pass annual floor amendments to increase funding for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. An enthusiast of American folk life and an amateur artist himself, Congressman Obey plays the harmonica in a bluegrass band, The Capitol Offenses, which has recorded three albums.

"Dave Obey is a great friend of the arts," said Robert L. Lynch, President & CEO of Americans for the Arts. "As the powerful ranking member of the House Appropriations Committee, he has fought tirelessly to rebuild funding for the arts in America. We are very pleased to have this opportunity to recognize the importance of his leadership to all of the arts in all of our nation's communities, from our rural heartland to the urban centers."

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. In addition to Rep. Obey, earlier this year other recipients of the 2004 awards were: Mayor Martin O'Malley of Baltimore for Local Arts Leadership, Governor Edward G. Rendell of Pennsylvania for State Arts Leadership, actor and producer Henry Winkler for Legendary Artist Award, and singer Tony Bennett for Arts Legacy Award.

Previous recipients of the National Award for Congressional Arts Leadership are 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).

Founded in 1933, the U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with a population of 30,000 or more. The primary roles of the Conference of Mayors are to: promote the development of effective national urban/suburban policy; strengthen federal-city relationships; ensure that federal policy meets urban needs; provide mayors with leadership and management tools; and create a forum in which mayors can share ideas and information.

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