



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert Lynch Responds to House Increases for Key Arts Agencies

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. House of Representatives today approved an amendment to increase funding for two federal cultural agencies in the FY 2006 budget. The amendment increases funding for the National Endowment for the Arts by \$10 million, to \$131 million in total, and for the National Endowment for the Humanities by \$5 million, to \$143 million. The additional funding will provide much needed support to local and state arts organizations around the country through the NEA's Challenge America program and NEH's We the People initiative.

This is the first time in six years that the House has passed the amendment by voice vote, with traditional opponents of the cultural agencies not even bothering to mount an opposition.

The amendment was offered by the co-chairs of the Congressional Arts Caucus, Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY) and Rep. Chris Shays (R-CT), joined by Rep. Norm Dicks (D-WA), Jim Leach (R-IA), and David Price (D-NC). The bipartisan Caucus is comprised of 184 House members. Consideration of the funding increase will now move to the U.S. Senate.

Following the vote, Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert L. Lynch stated the following:

"With today's vote, it's clear that support for culture is in the American mainstream. For six straight years, a strong bipartisan consensus in favor of public funding for the arts has prevailed even in the tough partisan atmosphere that grips Washington today. We are tremendously grateful for the outstanding leadership of the Congressional Arts Caucus.

"Members of Congress clearly understand the value of the arts and humanities, both for their intrinsic benefits and for the economic stimulus they provide. For the second year, we have provided lawmakers with our Creative Industries research, which includes compelling geo-

economic maps detailing the number of arts-related businesses and jobs in every Congressional district in the United States. Nationally, there are more than 578,000 arts-centric businesses employing 2.97 million individuals across the country."

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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