



## NEWS AND INFORMATION

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Arts Advocacy Day 2008

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Americans for the Arts, in conjunction with the Congressional Arts Caucus celebrated Arts Advocacy Day 2008 yesterday, in which more than 500 arts advocates from across the nation visited their representatives on Capitol Hill. A highlight of the day was the congressional hearing entitled “Role of the Arts in Creativity and Innovation” hosted by Representative Norm Dicks (D-WA), Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior. Americans for the Arts Artists Committee members Robert Redford, John Legend, and Kerry Washington; The Conference Board CEO Jonathan Spector; Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann; and Americans for the Arts’ president and CEO, Robert L. Lynch, testified at the hearing and emphasized the importance of developing strong public policies and appropriating increased public funding for the arts.

In its largest gathering yet, the 21st annual Arts Advocacy Day brought together a broad cross section of America’s cultural and civic organizations, along with hundreds of grassroots advocates from across the country. More than 500 activists called on Congress to support arts-friendly legislation and policies.

The Arts Advocacy Day call to action included the following issues:

- **Promote Creativity and Public Access to the Arts Through Support for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)**

Advocates urged Congress to support a budget of \$176 million for the NEA in the FY09 Interior Appropriations bill to restore funding for the creation, preservation, and presentation of the arts in America through the NEA’s core programs—Access to Artistic Excellence, Challenge America: Reaching Every Community, Federal/State Partnerships, and Learning in the Arts.

- Develop Access to Arts Education for All Students through Arts Education Funding and research through the U.S. Department of Education**

Congress was urged to allocate \$53 million for the Arts in Education programs in the FY09 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. They suggested that the U.S. Department of Education should be required to produce timely and comprehensive reports on the status of arts education in America's public schools, when implementing the Fast Response Statistical Survey and the National Assessment of Educational Progress.
- Help Children Achieve in School, Work and Life by Strengthening Arts Education in No Child Left Behind**

Advocated asked Congress to ensure that all American students reap the benefits of a full, comprehensive education in the arts. As Congress begins reauthorizing NCLB, it must provide support for state and local education agencies to ensure that arts education is fully implemented as a core academic subject. Congress is encouraged to include arts education in the hearings related to reauthorization of the NCLB.
- Support America's Nonprofit Arts Organizations by Encouraging Charitable Gifts to Arts and Culture**

Congress was encouraged to reinstate the IRA Charitable Rollover provision, allowing individuals to roll funds from their Individual Retirement Accounts to charity. In addition, members of Congress were invited to co-sponsor S. 548/H.R. 1524, the artist fair-market value deduction bill, which allows artists, writers, and composers to take a fair-market value deduction for contributions of their own works to arts organizations.
- Provide Access to Educational and Cultural Programming For All With Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)**

Advocated asked that Congress ensure the funding of no less than \$483 million in advance funding (FY 2011) for the CPB, and reject any rescissions as part of the FY09 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill.
- Strengthen Ties Between the United States and the World by Cultural Exchanges through the U.S. Department of State**

Advocates recommended increasing funding by \$10 million for the Cultural Programs Division of the State Department's Office of Citizen Exchanges in the FY09 State and Foreign Operations appropriations bill. This increase should be designated for the Professional Exchanges and Cultural Grant Program and the Performing Arts Initiative.
- Enrich America's Cultural and Intellectual Life through National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)**

Advocates urged Congress to support a budget of \$177 million for National Endowment for the NEH in the FY09 Interior Appropriations bill. This increase would significantly expand funding for NEH grant programs that advance research, education, preservation and public programs in the humanities. In addition, Congress should restore at least \$6.8 million for the Preservation & Access and Challenge Grants Divisions, cut in the president's FY 2009 budget proposal.

- **Promote Lifelong Learning and Protecting Our National Heritage by Supporting America's Museums**

Congress was asked to ensure an increase of \$15 million for grants to museums within the IMLS budget in the FY09 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill to promote and support lifelong learning and to protect our national heritage.

- **Improve The Visa Process for Foreign Guest Artists at U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services**

Advocates urged Congress to enact the Arts Require Timely Service (ARTS) Act, legislation that will require U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to reduce the total processing times for O and P petitions filed by, or on behalf of, nonprofit arts-related organization to a maximum of 45 days.

- **Protect Performing Arts Technology through Federal Communications Commission (FCC)**

Advocates urged Congress to instruct the FCC to preserve the ability of wireless microphones used in performing arts venues to operate without interference. Adequate testing must be performed before permitting new devices that would allow unlicensed devices to threaten wireless microphone use: S. 234, H.R. 1597, and S. 337.

In these meetings, advocates also provided Members of Congress with copies of the 2008 Congressional Arts Handbook, which includes information on important issues affecting the arts. The handbook is available online.

Arts Advocacy Day was officially kicked off at a Congressional Arts Breakfast on Capitol Hill, organized by Americans for the Arts in conjunction with the Congressional Arts Caucus. At the breakfast, Americans for the Arts and the U.S. Conference of Mayors jointly presented the **2008 National Award for Congressional Arts Leadership to Senator Patrick Leahy (VT)**.

Speakers at the breakfast included:

- John Legend, five-time Grammy Award-winning R&B singer, songwriter and pianist

- Kerry Washington, critically acclaimed actress
- Peter Dinklage, legendary singer-songwriter
- Rep. Norm Dicks (WA)
- Rep. John Lewis (GA)
- Rep. Betty McCollum (MN)
- Rep. Ralph Regula (OH)
- Rep. Chris Shays (CT), co-chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus
- Rep. Louise Slaughter (NY), co-chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus
- Sen. Patrick Leahy (VT)
- Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (RI)
- Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann (HI)
- Robert L. Lynch, Americans for the Arts, President and CEO

After the breakfast, Representative Norm Dicks (D-WA) hosted the hearing entitled “Role of the Arts in Creativity and Innovation.”

Speakers at the Hearing included:

- **Robert Redford**, Academy Award-winning director, actor, producer, activist
- **John Legend**, five-time Grammy Award-winning R&B singer, songwriter and pianist
- **Kerry Washington**, Critically acclaimed actress
- **Jonathan Spector**, CEO of The Conference Board
- **Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann**
- **Robert L. Lynch**, Americans for the Arts, President and CEO

On the eve of Arts Advocacy Day, best-selling author and expert on innovation, competition, and the changing workforce world, Daniel Pink delivered Americans for the Arts’ 21st Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy. This leading national forum for arts policy, served as an opportunity for public discourse at the highest levels on the importance of the arts and culture to our nation’s well-being. In his provocative lecture, Daniel Pink made what he called a “hard-headed case for arts education.” He declared the abilities that one develops through the arts are immeasurable; which is why in the 21st century, arts education is a matter of economic survival.

Jonathan Spector, CEO of The Conference Board introduced Pink. Mr. Spector presented the findings of Ready to Innovate: Are Educators and executives Aligned on the Creative Readiness of the U.S. Workforce? The study by The Conference Board and Americans for the Arts in partnership with the American Association of School Administrators, explored the

affect on the U.S. workforce's readiness in enabling innovation/creativity and entrepreneurship when art-training is often deemphasized in education and job-training.

**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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