

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS (NEA)

PROMOTING CREATIVITY AND PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE ARTS

ACTION NEEDED

We urge Congress:

- To support a budget of \$180 million for the NEA in the FY 2011 Interior Appropriations bill to:
 - Increase 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.
 - After designating an increase for core programs, provide for the president's request to fund a new initiative, *Our Town*.

NEA Annual Appropriations, FY 1992 to present (in millions of dollars)

Fiscal Year	'92	'93	'94	'95	'96/ '97	'98/ '99	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06/ '07	'08	'09	'10
Appropriation	176.0	174.5	170.2	162.3	99.5	98.0	97.6	104.8	115.2	115.7	121.0	121.3	124.4	144.7	155	167.5

Note: Figures above are not adjusted for inflation. Source: NEA

TALKING POINTS

The NEA supports artistic excellence and improves access to the arts by granting funds to nonprofit arts organizations.

- In FY 2009, the NEA awarded more than \$110 million in appropriated funds through almost 2,400 grants reaching all 435 congressional districts. In addition, \$50 million in 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds were used to distribute 693 grants, reaching all 50 states.
- Federal support for the arts serves to widen citizen access to the arts, making the cultural, educational, and economic benefits of the arts available to more communities.
- Forty percent of all NEA program funds—approximately \$43.6 million in FY 2009—are re-granted through the state arts agencies, ensuring that federal funding has an even greater reach. In partnership with the NEA, state arts agencies awarded 24,000 grants to 18,000 organizations, schools, and artists in more than 5,100 communities across the United States. In addition, state arts agencies received \$16.8 million in ARRA funds from the NEA to re-grant within their states. Through programs like Challenge America, the NEA supports artistic activities that reach underserved populations.
- Federal support for the arts enables communities to preserve their cultural heritage as a legacy for future generations, building bridges across cultures, and involving citizens in community life.
- Federal funding for the arts is critical to leveraging private funding. The NEA requires at least a one-to-one match of federal funds from all grant recipients—a match far exceeded by most grantees. On average, each NEA grant leverages at least seven dollars from other state, local, and private sources, magnifying the impact of the federal investment. Private support cannot match the leveraging role of government cultural funding.
- With more funding, the NEA's core programs could better bring the best in the arts to all Americans.

The NEA contributes to the development and economic growth of communities nationwide.

- NEA grants to organizations and state and local arts agencies help them maximize their economic and social contributions to their communities.
- The nonprofit arts industry generates \$166.2 billion annually in economic activity, supports 5.7 million full-time equivalent jobs, and returns \$12.6 billion to the federal government in income taxes. Measured against direct federal cultural spending of about \$1.4 billion, that's a return of nearly nine to one. (Figures from Americans for the Arts, *Arts & Economic Prosperity III* study, 2007).
- Nationally, there are 668,267 businesses in the United States involved in the creation or distribution of the arts. These businesses employ 2.9 million people, representing 4.05 percent of all businesses and 2.18 percent of all employees, respectively. (Figures from Americans for the Arts, *Creative Industries*, 2010)
- The arts attract new tourism dollars. Seventy-eight percent of U.S. travelers include cultural and heritage events on their trips, spending an average of \$994 per trip—more than the \$641 spent on the average U.S. trip. Half of the expenditures are on activities, dining, and shopping. (*U.S. Cultural & Heritage Tourism Marketing Council, U.S. Department of Commerce, Cultural and Heritage Traveler Research*, 2009.)
- America's arts and entertainment are leading exports, with estimates of more than \$30 billion annually in overseas sales. Public spending on the arts helps position the United States to compete globally.

TALKING POINTS (CONTINUED)

The NEA supports lifelong learning in the arts, through grants, partnerships, research, and national initiatives.

- Students with an education rich in the arts have better grade point averages in core academic subjects, score better on standardized tests, and have lower drop-out rates than students without arts education (*Critical Evidence*, www.aep-arts.org/files/publications/Critical%20Evidence.pdf, published by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies in collaboration with the Arts Education Partnership).
- NEA grants support a wide range of projects, including educational programs for adults, collaborations between state arts agencies and state education agencies, and K–12 partnerships between arts institutions and educators.
- The NEA funds school-based and community-based grant programs that help children and youth acquire knowledge and understanding of and skills in the arts. Projects must provide participatory learning and engage students with skilled artists, teachers, and excellent art.

BACKGROUND

The arts infrastructure of the United States is critical to the nation's cultural well-being as well as its economic vitality. It is supported by a remarkable combination of government, business, foundation, and individual donors. In a striking example of federal/state partnership, the NEA distributes 40 percent of its program dollars to state arts agencies, conditional on each state devoting its own appropriated funds. This partnership ensures that each state has a stable source of arts funding and policy. These grants, combined with state legislative appropriations and other dollars, are distributed widely to strengthen arts infrastructures and ensure broad access to the arts.

The NEA has provided strategic leadership and investment in the arts for more than 40 years. Among its proudest accomplishments is the growth of arts activity in areas of the nation that were previously underserved or not served at all. Americans can now see professional productions and exhibitions of high quality in their own hometowns, and every congressional district now receives direct NEA grants.

Through its core programs—Access to Artistic Excellence, Challenge America: Reaching Every Community, Federal/State Partnerships, and Learning in the Arts—the NEA funds dance, design, folk & traditional arts, literature, local arts agencies, media arts, multidisciplinary, museums, music, musical theater, opera, presenting, theater, and visual arts. In addition to direct grants, the NEA provides important leadership that advances the arts sector through national initiatives, research, and publications.

The American public favors spending federal tax dollars in support of the arts, and has made its feelings known to Congress. In fiscal year 2008, the NEA received an increase of \$20.3 million, through the leadership of House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee Chair Congressman Norm Dicks (D-WA) and Senate Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee Chair Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA). This increase began to lay the foundation for full restoration of NEA funding to its 1992 level of \$176 million. The Congressional Arts Caucus, led by co-chairs Reps. Louise Slaughter (D-NY) and Todd Platts (R-PA), has helped to ensure the continued growth in the NEA appropriations. Federal support for the arts provides a measure of stability critical at a time when other resources are diminished.

With the NEA receiving partial restoration beginning in FY 2008 and continuing through FY 2010 to a level of \$167.5 million, the arts community seeks an appropriation of \$180 million for FY 2011. The president's budget request would reduce current NEA support to \$161.3 million in 2011. Funding the NEA at \$180 million not only would restore the agency to its 1992 level, but also would provide additional support to help maintain a healthy nonprofit arts sector that can contribute fully to communities nationwide. Current funding amounts to just 54 cents per capita, as compared to 70 cents per capita in FY 1992.

It is the mission of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to foster the excellence, diversity, and vitality of the arts in the United States and to broaden public access to the arts. The NEA must provide support for building the capacity of American arts organizations and artists to create and share their work, by initiating national programs, partnering effectively with state and local arts agencies, and helping to ensure lifelong learning in the arts for every American.