

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 16, 2018

The Honorable Ken Calvert  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,  
and Related Agencies  
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment  
and Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum,

Thank you for your support of our federal cultural agencies. In the coming year, we urge you to continue bipartisan support with a funding level of at least \$155 million for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in the Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) Interior Appropriations bill.

**Federal investment in the arts provides all Americans with expanded opportunities to engage with the arts in each state and district**, and helps preserve access to the cultural, educational, and economic benefits of the arts. The NEA is the largest annual funder of the arts and provides funding to often-overlooked cultural organizations outside major cities.

In addition to grants made to every Congressional district, national research, and critical partnerships with the states, the NEA is **at the forefront of the effort to build a national network of care for our injured service members, whether they are active duty or veterans, in medical treatment or transitioning back home to their bases and communities**. The Creative Forces Military Healing Arts Network focuses support for service members and veterans who have been diagnosed with traumatic brain injury (TBI) and psychological health conditions. This program, expanded in 2017, now includes 11 clinical sites across the country and a telehealth program for patients in rural and remote areas. It represents an important partnership between the NEA, the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, and state local community arts organizations, and is committed to advancing research and **building a national network of care in both clinical and community settings** benefiting our injured service members, veterans, and their families.

With an overall budget increase of \$1.9 million to NEA's funding, as approved by Congress for FY17, the Creative Forces program has successfully expanded to additional clinical sites. **Growing and unmet demand among military treatment facilities for creative art therapy programs continues**. Economic analyses, cost studies, and clinical research show a positive trend in the use of creative arts therapies and their impact on containing healthcare costs and facilitating functional outcomes achievement. With the \$1.9 million increase in funding for FY17, which was also recommended and supported by the Committee, the NEA is building national network of care for our injured service members.

In addition to supporting our military service members, the NEA contributes to the development and economic growth of our communities. Arts and culture-related industries create jobs, attract investments,

generate tax revenues, and stimulate local economies through tourism and consumer purchases. These arts businesses represent 4 percent of all U.S. businesses and 2 percent of all employees, respectively. **America's arts and entertainment are also leading exports, with \$63.6 billion annually in overseas sales, creating a \$20 billion arts trade surplus.**

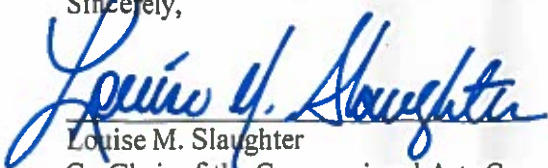
According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and the NEA (as reported in the Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account) **the arts and culture sector contributes \$763.6 billion to the U.S. economy, or 4.2 percent of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product.** This represents more than construction (3.9%) or transportation and warehousing (2.9%). From the work of nonprofit arts organizations to the impact of cultural tourism, **the creative sector is important to state economies all across the country.** Few other federal investments have such a widespread impact and multiplying effect across the nation as does the NEA, nor such a significant return on investment. Every \$1 spent on direct grants leverages up to \$9 in private and other public funds, generating more than \$500 million in matching support while at the same time enriching our children and communities with access to the arts they might not otherwise have. **Moreover, forty percent of NEA's grant-making budget is re-granted through state arts agencies and regional arts organizations.** Private support cannot match the leveraging role of government cultural funding.

The requested funding for FY19 will help the NEA maintain its enormously successful programs, including *The Big Read, Our Town, Challenge America, The Mayors' Institute on City Design, The Citizens Institute on Rural Design, Blue Star Museums, Shakespeare in American Communities, Art Works, and Poetry Out Loud*, which help the NEA reach every congressional district in the country, serving rural and urban communities; impacting veterans, businesses, and schools. **In FY17, the NEA granted \$127 million in appropriated funds through over 2,500 grants in every Congressional district in the country.**

The arts also play a significant role in equalizing educational opportunities. **Students with an education rich in the arts have higher GPAs and standardized test scores and lower drop-out rates.** The NEA's education programs have helped to sustain support in local communities for arts education, which has been proven to help close the education achievement gap and also benefit children and adults in many important ways throughout their lives.

**We strongly urge you to support NEA funding at least \$155 million in the Fiscal Year 2019 Interior Appropriations bill.** By approving this level of funding, you will maintain the NEA's ability to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to benefit from the arts. We appreciate your attention to this request, and hope we can count on your continued support.

Sincerely,



Louise M. Slaughter  
Co-Chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus  
Member of Congress



Leonard Lance  
Co-Chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus  
Member of Congress

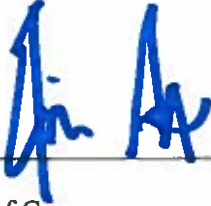
  
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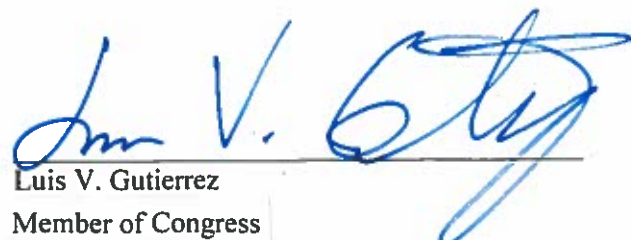
  
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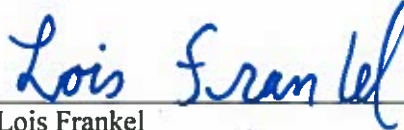
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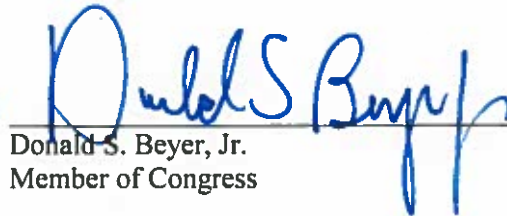
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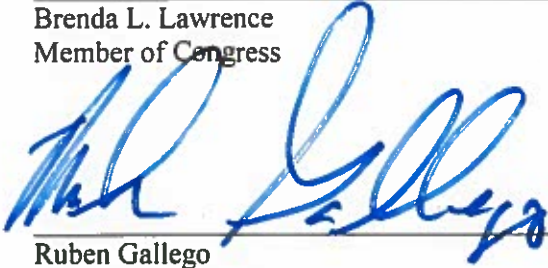
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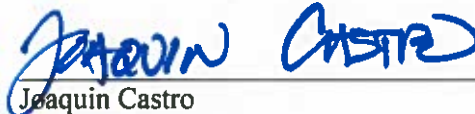
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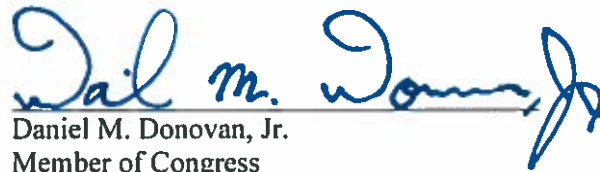
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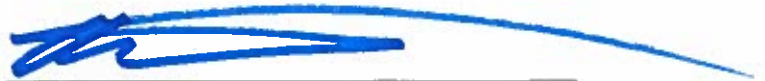
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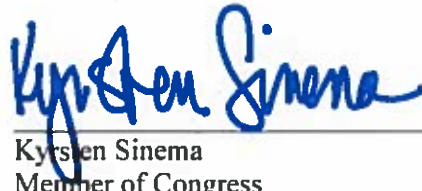


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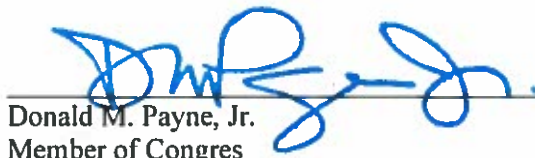
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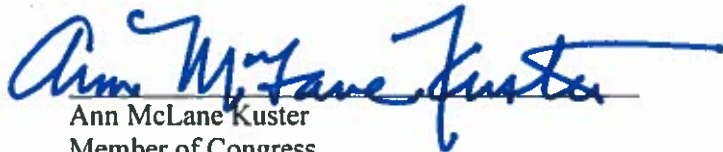
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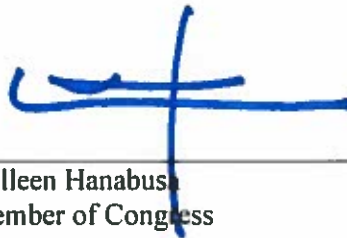
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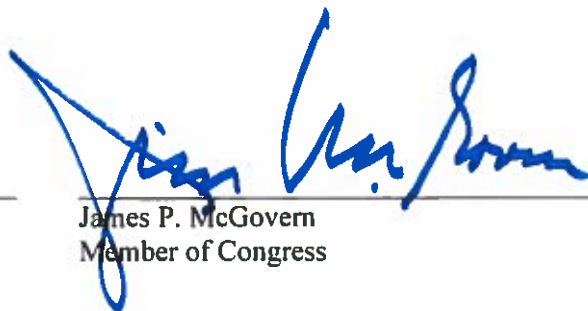
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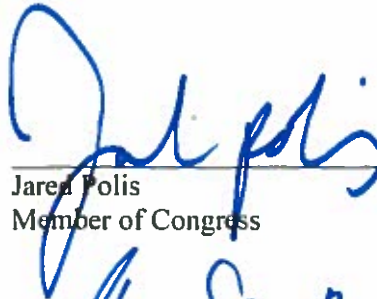
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