



AMERICANS for the ARTS  
ACTION FUND

# NEWS

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## Seattle's One Percent for Art Ordinance Reinstated

Thanks to a recent appellate court decision, the City of Seattle will continue to be known for its leadership in public art. For more than 30 years, the City has been setting aside 1 percent of its public construction budgets to fund millions of dollars worth of public art projects. This arts-friendly approach has since been emulated in hundreds of communities across the country as well as in the private sector, with public art projects beautifying civic landscapes and connecting citizens to both indoor and outdoor sites in a more meaningful way.

But the future of Seattle's One Percent for Art program was threatened by a class action lawsuit in 2004, challenging the practice of subjecting the construction costs of a rate payer-funded public utility to the One Percent for Art ordinance. In a surprise decision, a Seattle trial court invalidated the ordinance as applied to the City's electric utility.

Concerned that this lower court decision would establish bad legal precedence for other communities, Americans for the Arts Action Fund Executive Director and Chief Counsel Nina Ozlu filed a comprehensive *amicus curiae* brief in August 2005, supporting the government's appeal that the lower court judge's decision be reversed. In December 2005, the Washington State Court of Appeals reversed the most important public policy aspect of the lower court decision and thankfully reinstated Seattle's famous One Percent for Art ordinance.

Michael Killoren, director of the Mayor's Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs, had this to say: "We want to really thank the Americans for the Arts leadership in filing the *amicus* brief. It was critical because it signaled the potential implications of this decision nationwide."



Light Bulb Bench, 2003  
Ries Niemi  
Stainless Steel  
(North Service Center)



Hammering Man, 1991  
Jonathan Borofsky  
Painted Cor-ten Steel

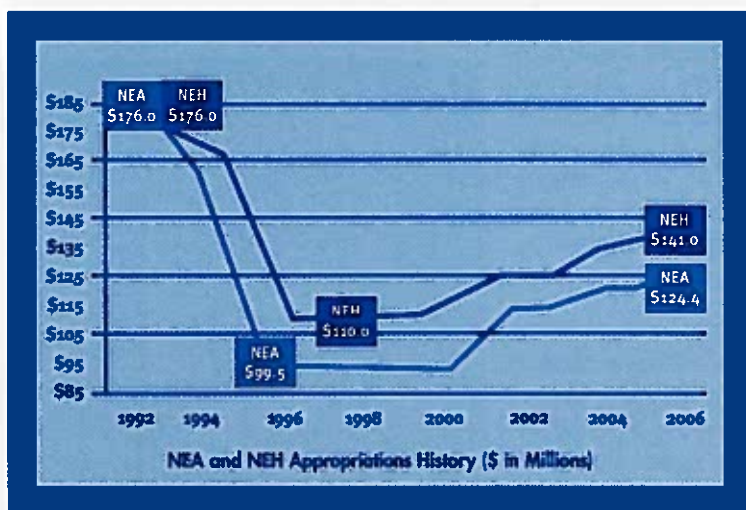
# Giving VOICE to the Arts

## SHAPING FEDERAL ARTS POLICY

The Arts Action Fund monitors arts policy at the federal level and helps bring citizens' voices to the table when important arts issues are debated. For detailed legislative updates for each of these items, please visit [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/LegislativeNews](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/LegislativeNews).

## Federal Funding for the Arts Up Overall in 2006

Funding for the arts in the final federal FY06 budget was up overall, although not by much. Last-minute budget maneuvering resulted in a 1 percent across the board reduction in all federal programs. Here are the final results for the arts:



Museum grant programs at the Institute of Museum and Library Services were funded at \$31 million, a 2 percent increase over last year. The National Endowment for the Arts received \$124.41 million, \$3.14 million more than in 2005, a 2.62 percent increase. And, funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities increased by 2.15 percent to \$141.02 million. Federal arts education programs were funded at \$35.28 million, a 1 percent reduction from 2005 levels.

## Tax Deduction Benefit for Artists Proposed

The Senate approved a bill late last year with numerous tax reforms, including tax incentives for charitable giving. Within the bill is a proposal allowing artists who donate their work to museums or other charities to take a full market value tax deduction. Other good provisions for arts organizations allow taxpayers to give money from their IRA accounts penalty-free to charities as well as a provision that would allow those who do not itemize on their tax returns to claim deductions for charitable giving.

Unfortunately, the bill also has one bad provision for those who do itemize on their tax returns. The change would result in a floor of \$210 for individuals and \$420 for joint filers, thereby limiting the tax deductibility of total annual gifts above these amounts to nonprofit charities. Americans for the Arts is concerned that this last provision will discourage charitable giving, something nonprofit arts organizations can ill afford. The bill will go to conference soon, and when the conferees are announced, the Arts Action Fund will be ready to reach out to help influence the legislation.



## Message from the President

As I write today, our staff is evaluating President Bush's proposed FY07 budget on the arts and arts education. As we expected, the President's request underfunds the arts again this year, specifically attempting to zero-out funding for arts education programs. In his State of the Union address on January 31, the President rightly recognized that the nation needs to prepare its children to compete in a more global, 21st-century workforce by fostering "talent and creativity." However, he recommends significant investments only in math and science. We know that one of the best ways to spark creativity is firing up kids' brains through the arts.

You can count on the Arts Action Fund to monitor and take action on the President's budget and proposals in Congress that impact funding for the arts. In fact, we are currently preparing for our annual Arts Advocacy Day conference in Washington, DC, where hundreds of dedicated grassroots arts advocates from across the country descend on Capitol Hill to advocate for the arts, this year on March 14. Throughout the day, Americans for the Arts trains arts activists on key legislative issues and then connects them to state delegation teams to visit with Members of Congress and make personal pleas for strong arts policies and increased public funding for the arts and arts education. It's a wonderful opportunity to come face to face with your lawmakers, and I hope many of you will join us or send in your Capwiz message.

Please know that everything we do here is made possible by your loyal membership support and I'm extremely grateful to have you standing with us. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you again for your support.

Robert L. Lynch  
President and CEO, Americans for the Arts Action Fund

## SUPPORTING ARTS ADVOCACY IN THE STATES

### Massachusetts Poised for \$500 Million Infusion for Arts & Cultural Facilities

The average age of arts and cultural facilities in Massachusetts is 93 years. That's a lot of old buildings housing vital arts and cultural organizations. And that's why a unique statewide coalition came together to create a cultural facilities fund.

Led by the Boston Foundation; the Massachusetts Cultural Council; and Massachusetts Advocates for the Arts, Sciences and Humanities (MAASH), the Campaign for Cultural Facilities has successfully advocated for state funds to maintain, renovate, and expand Massachusetts' cultural facilities. The Economic Investment Act will create a fund of \$25 to \$29 million per year in grant money, half of which will come from existing tourism-related infrastructure funds, supplemented by bonds secured by an incremental increase in hotel/motel tax revenue. The legislation requires organizations receiving funds to secure matching dollars, leveraging significant private investment in arts and cultural facilities.

Dan Hunter, executive director of MAASH, says, "We heard from leaders across the state—legislators, mayors, business and community leaders—that the arts are a significant economic development tool in all regions." By bringing business leaders, artists, and public officials together, the organizers were able to secure significant funding to support the key role that art, culture, and heritage play in the Massachusetts economy.

### Governor Schwarzenegger Proposes \$100 Million Arts and Music Education Increase

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has proposed \$100 million for arts and music education in the form of block grants to school districts. If passed, California would be the first state to specifically dedicate state funding for arts education. Americans for the Arts and our partners in California, including the California Alliance for Arts Education, are monitoring the proposal's progress and working together to help shape the potential long-term impact on arts education programs. To keep up to date on progress in California, visit [www.artsed411.org](http://www.artsed411.org).

## LOCAL ACTION FOR THE ARTS

### 2006 Public Leadership in the Arts Awards Presented

What do a New Orleans high school for the arts, the Mayor of Nashville, and the Governor of Iowa all have in common? They all received awards from Americans for the Arts and the U.S. Conference of Mayors for demonstrating outstanding leadership in advancement of the arts. The awards were presented at the annual Mayors Arts Luncheon in Washington, DC, on January 25, 2006. Here's why:

**New Orleans Center for Creative Arts | Riverfront (NOCCA) received the 2006 National Award for Excellence in Arts Programs for Youth.** As Louisiana's premier arts training center for high school students, NOCCA's alumni include such successful artists as Harry Connick, Jr. and the Marsalis



New Orleans music students traveled to Washington, DC, to perform at the Mayors Arts Luncheon, where Americans for the Arts and the U.S. Conference of Mayors presented the 2006 Public Leadership in the Arts Awards.

brothers (Branford, Delfeayo, Jason, and Wynton). The Center provides preprofessional instruction in all areas of the arts tuition-free to Louisiana students who successfully audition.



(L-R) Americans for the Arts President and CEO Bob Lynch, NOCCA President and CEO Gary Alan Wood, Mayor Purcell, and Governor Vilsack.

**Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell was awarded the 2006 National Award for Local Arts Leadership** for his unwavering support for the arts in Nashville and its unique identity as "Music City, U.S.A."

Mayor Purcell helped establish a Percent for Public Art Program in Nashville and has increased city funding to arts organizations by 61 percent over the past six years.

### Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack received the 2006 National Award for State Arts Leadership

in recognition of his support for innovative programs in the state of Iowa. Under his leadership, the state developed the Vision Iowa Program to invest in education, cultural, and recreational attractions and the new Iowa Cultural Trust to provide operating support for arts organizations. In addition, the state launched a program to certify Cultural and Entertainment Districts in communities across Iowa.

## In Memoriam

### Wendy Wasserstein

Broadway theaters dimmed their lights on January 31, 2006, in honor of Wendy Wasserstein, Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, arts activist, and uncommon woman, who died of lymphoma the previous day.

Wasserstein was best known for her plays, among them *The Heidi Chronicles* and *The Sisters Rosensweig*, which meaningfully and humorously chronicled the ups and downs of the baby boom generation. She was also a dedicated spokesperson for the arts and helped launch the Arts Action Fund at our kick-off event in New York City in 2004.

"When I look back on my own childhood, I would say in many ways the arts saved my life," said Wasserstein when she delivered the 1999 Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy for Americans for the Arts. "Art for children is not simply icing on the cake."

All of us at Americans for the Arts Action Fund join the theater community and the millions of others who were touched by Wasserstein's work in mourning the passing of this great American artist.



Wendy Wasserstein was an active member of the Artists Committee of Americans for the Arts Action Fund.

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## Election Watch 2006

The stakes for the arts are high in the 2006 elections. Here's a first look at some of the significant open seats in Congress that we're watching.

In the Senate, Democrat Mark Dayton from Minnesota is retiring. It is quite likely that Congressman Mark Kennedy (R-MN-6th), who received a D on the Arts Action Fund Congressional Arts Report Card, will run as the Republican nominee.

In the U.S. House of Representatives, Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-AZ-8th), who received an A rating on our Report Card, surprised many with his retirement announcement last November.

Other open seat races of special interest include: the 9th district in Tennessee being vacated by Congressman Harold Ford, Jr., a Democrat with an A+ rating; the Illinois 6th district race being vacated by Republican Congressman Henry Hyde, who has maintained a D arts record; and California's 50th district, formerly represented by Congressman Randy "Duke" Cunningham, who was also rated D on our Congressional Report Card.

## About Us

Americans for the Arts Action Fund is the advocacy arm of Americans for the Arts, engaging citizens in ensuring that all Americans have the opportunity to appreciate, value, and participate in the arts. Arts Action Fund members are citizen activists who are committed to helping make certain that arts-friendly public policies are adopted at every level of government and in the private sector. *Arts Action News* is delivered four times a year exclusively to supporters of the Arts Action Fund.



Your support of the Arts Action Fund PAC will allow us to have an impact on these and other significant races.

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[www.ArtsActionFund.org/PAC](http://www.ArtsActionFund.org/PAC).