

Arts Action News

THE NEWSLETTER OF
AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS ACTION FUND

Vol. IV 2007



ArtsVote2008
A program of Americans for the Arts Action Fund

Arts on the Campaign Trail

Americans for the Arts Action Fund is working hard to put arts and arts education on the agenda for the 2008 presidential race. As part of our **ArtsVote2008** initiative, we recently distributed a 10-Point Arts Policy Brief to every candidate seeking the nomination for president.

The brief provides candidates with information they need to make the arts a centerpiece of their platforms, including detailed background information on each recommendation, key policy initiatives, and talking points. **ArtsVote2008** activists have already delivered the brief to campaign staffers in New Hampshire.

In addition, we are providing candidates the chance to work with the arts community in developing and publicizing their positions on the arts and arts education. Specifically, we are offering access to our extensive research, including Americans for the Arts' recently released study, *Arts & Economic Prosperity III*, on how the arts boost local economies. **ArtsVote2008**

also hosted an unprecedented forum on November 29, in Concord, NH. All of the presidential candidates were invited to present and discuss their arts policy platforms. This event was recorded and is available to Arts Action Fund members on our website: www.ArtsVote.org.

With the election now less than a year away, the Arts Action Fund will continue to work hard to fuel a robust discussion about the arts throughout the 2008 election year.

You can read part of our 10-Point Arts Policy Brief on page 2, or in its entirety on our website: www.ArtsActionFund.org.



ArtsVoteNH Coordinator Suzanne Delle Harrison met with Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY) at a rally in Nashua, NH, in July 2007. **ArtsVoteNH** is a partnership between Americans for the Arts and New Hampshire Citizens for the Arts that seeks to impact New Hampshire's presidential primary.

Leave No Child Behind in the Arts

The 2002 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires that schools provide rigorous instruction in all "core academic subjects," including the arts. However, a report from the Center for Education Policy concludes that 22 percent of U.S. school districts have reduced instructional time for art and music since the enactment of NCLB.

As the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives move closer to reauthorization of NCLB, Americans

for the Arts Action Fund is leading the Arts Working Group, a coalition of more than 50 national arts organizations, to ensure that reauthorization of NCLB policies will strengthen arts education.

On September 12, 2007, the Arts Working Group presented its policy recommendations for NCLB to the House Education and Labor Committee. Recommendations included keeping the arts in the definition of core academic subjects, requiring

annual state reports to include the status of arts education in schools, reauthorizing the U.S. Department of Education's Arts in Education Programs, and including the arts in research on the effectiveness of federal arts education programs.

To stay up-to-date on the status of NCLB reauthorization and what you can do to ensure the arts aren't left behind, sign up to receive our e-mail alerts at www.CapWiz.com/ArtsUSA.

Message from the President

Greetings! First, let me thank you for being one of thousands of Americans for the Arts Action Fund members who are helping us to transform public policy for the arts. Your support really makes a difference, and I want you to know that we appreciate you.

With the 2008 presidential primary season under way, dozens of hopefuls are on the road and on the airwaves reaching out to voters in early primary states. But are the candidates talking about the importance of the arts and arts education in their stump speeches? The answer is not nearly enough!

The coming months offer a tremendous opportunity to elevate the arts and arts education on our national agenda. As arts supporters, you and I must make sure the candidates are addressing the issues we care about.

There's a lot that each of us can do to bring the arts to the forefront in the presidential primaries. You can attend candidate forums and ask questions about what candidates would do as president to ensure community arts organizations receive the federal funding they need. You can challenge candidates to endorse tax incentives and other policies that help develop local economies through arts and culture projects. You can demand to know if candidates support expanding arts education programs in our schools and encourage them to

incorporate artists, innovators, and creative-sector leaders in government and public policy planning.

Another way to make the arts a priority in 2008 is by contributing to Americans for the Arts Action Fund's Political Action Committee (PAC). If you haven't already contributed to the PAC, we need you. We can only seek funds from Arts Action Fund members like you. You can help us provide critical support for arts-friendly candidates in 2008. To learn more about the PAC, see page 4—or use the enclosed envelope to donate now.

Thank you for standing with us to help build a strong advocacy movement for the arts and arts education!



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

In the News

Americans for the Arts Action Fund President and CEO Robert L. Lynch set the record straight in the following "Letters to the Editor" published by major newspapers.

The New York Times

The New York Times – August 4, 2007

Lynch applauds Mayor Bloomberg's proposal to set new standards for arts education in New York City and encourages the mayor to set financial benchmarks in support of the arts in education for city schools.

The Washington Post

The Washington Post – September 15, 2007

Lynch expresses disappointment that *The Washington Post* failed to discuss the arts in op-ed commentaries on the No Child Left Behind law and presents arguments for strengthening the role of the arts in our schools.

10-Point Arts Policy Brief for Candidates



Encourage 2008 presidential candidates to take a stand for the arts by incorporating these arts-friendly measures into their policy platforms.

1. **The National Endowment for the Arts**—Be a champion for the National Endowment for the Arts and other federal cultural agencies that make direct grants to local arts agencies and arts organizations.
2. **Arts Education**—Support federal education policies that include the arts.
3. **The Arts & Economic Development**—Encourage economic development policies and tax incentives for the arts, which build communities and return revenue to local, state, and federal governments.
4. **Housing & Urban Development**—Help our country's mayors and governors expand and strengthen cultural programs and facilities through the Community Development Block Grant program.
5. **Transportation Programs**—Encourage public art projects and raise the visibility of cultural sites through the Transportation Enhancement program at the U.S. Department of Transportation.
6. **Healthcare & the Arts**—Support efforts to include the arts in healthcare delivery programs and encourage initiatives that provide healthcare coverage to arts organizations and individual artists.
7. **Rural Initiatives**—Contribute to rural economic development by promoting local artists and heritage initiatives with grants from the Forest Service and other U.S. Department of Agriculture programs.
8. **Public Diplomacy**—Support the Cultural Exchange programs at the U.S. State Department as one component of a robust public diplomacy effort.
9. **National & Community Service**—Encourage expansion of service learning and volunteerism in partnership with arts and culture organizations as a primary need under the National Community Service Trust Act.
10. **National Arts Leadership Opportunities**—Support the inclusion of artists, innovators, and creative-sector leaders at all levels of government and public policy planning.

Supporting Arts Advocacy in States and Cities

Creative Funding for the Arts in Rhode Island

Revenue from a new scratch-off lottery ticket in Rhode Island will strengthen the local arts community. Thanks to the advocacy efforts of Rhode Island Citizens for the Arts, the state lottery will donate all proceeds from the first three months of sales to the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts. The new scratch-off ticket was designed by a Portsmouth, RI, artist and features images of the local Fusionworks Dance Company. Sales began on October 1, 2007.

Louisiana Adopts Statewide Arts Education Requirements

Thanks to Louisiana arts advocates and Lieutenant Governor Mitch Landrieu, new curriculum requirements for the visual and performing arts will soon be in place in Louisiana public schools. To secure the victory, Tommy Usrey of the Northeast Louisiana Arts Council sent out "Tommy's Tip" e-mails to activists, complete with ideas on how to talk to legislators and regular updates on swing votes. Forty well-known arts leaders attended the Senate Education Committee hearing to make personal contact with their legislators, and hundreds more advocates used our Arts Action Fund E-Advocacy Center to send e-mails directly to legislators. The organized grassroots effort kept this important arts education legislation moving forward to final passage.

Tapping into Tax Dollars

With local government budget shortfalls predicted in coming years, arts advocates are wisely exploring alternatives for public funding. Lodging taxes and car rental taxes are two of the most popular and successful examples. Recent car rental taxes have been implemented to benefit performing arts centers in Las Vegas and Charlotte, NC, and it's a trend that is gaining strength.

Many localities are realizing that arts and culture amenities are a big draw for tourists. Small surcharges on items like lodging or car rentals that are largely absorbed by visitors and then invested back into the local arts community make great sense.

Seattle Increases Arts and Culture Funding

Michael Killoren, director of Seattle's Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, cited Americans for the Arts' *Arts & Economic Prosperity III* research study as a major factor in the city's decision to increase funding for arts and culture by \$1 million this year. Of the \$4.2 million arts and culture budget, \$2.7 million will be devoted to converting a city park building into a multi-arts facility that will include gallery, office, and exhibition spaces for arts organizations.

Public Leadership in the Arts Awards Presented

Americans for the Arts presents a series of Public Leadership in the Arts Awards to honor leaders at all levels of government for their exceptional work in promoting the arts and arts education.

The National Award for County Arts Leadership is presented in conjunction with the National Association of Counties. The 2007 award was presented to the government of Howard County, MD. Howard County has made support for arts and culture a centerpiece of its economic development plan.

The Lieutenant Governors Arts Award honors a public official who has demonstrated outstanding leadership in the advancement of the arts at the state level and is presented in partnership with the National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA). This year's award recipient was Lieutenant

Governor John Bohlinger (R) of Montana for his decisive role in protecting and promoting the arts and arts education in his state.

The State Arts Leadership Award is presented in conjunction with the National Conference of State Legislatures. The 2007 State Arts Leadership Award went to Arizona State Senator Carolyn Allen (R), who was nominated by Arizona Citizens for the Arts as the most vocal arts advocate in the Arizona Legislature.



State Arts Funding on the Rise

As we look back over the past year, climbing arts budgets in the states provide solid proof that our grassroots arts advocacy is working. In 2006, 44 states saw budget increases, while 22 of these states had at least 10 percent growth in funding for the arts. As 2008 budgets are being finalized, it appears that 43 states will maintain or increase their arts funding with an average increase of 10 percent, while 13 states are expected to have increases above 20 percent. Keep up the good work in your state!



(L-R) Ken Ulman, Howard County executive; Coleen West, executive director of the Howard County Arts Council; and Jay Dick, director of state and local affairs at Americans for the Arts.

(L-R) Montana Lt. Governor John Bohlinger and Wisconsin Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton, who is also chair of the NLGA Arts Committee and vice chair of the NLGA.



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Your Quarterly Arts Action Fund Newsletter

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Americans for the Arts Action Fund is the political 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. Executive Director, Nina Ozlu, www.ArtsActionFund.org.

For more information, please visit our website:
www.ArtsActionFund.org/PAC.

Monday, September 1–Thursday, September 4, 2008
Republican National Convention
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN

Monday, August 25–Thursday, August 28, 2008
Democratic National Convention
Denver, CO

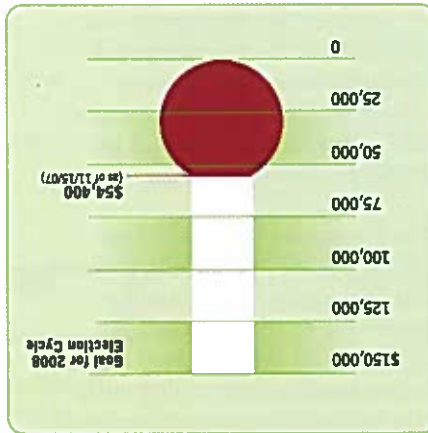
Saturday, June 21, 2008
Breakfast Reception (time TBD)
Sheraton Philadelphia City Center
Philadelphia, PA
(Coincides with the 2008 Americans for the Arts Annual Convention)

Monday, March 31, 2008
Arts Advocacy Day:
The 2008 National Arts Action Summit
Washington, DC

Mark your calendars and come out to support the Arts Action Fund PAC at these upcoming Arts Action Fund Members' Receptions and PAC Fundraisers:

Upcoming Events

ArtsVote2008 Campaign Fundraising Goal



PAC Dollars Already at Work
in 2008 Campaign
The Arts Action Fund PAC has
already made campaign contribu-
tions to select congressional
leaders in the arts for their 2008
campaigns:
• Sen. Robert Bennett (R-UT)
• Rep. Norm Dicks (D-WA)
• Rep. Tim Ryan (D-OH)
• Rep. Christopher Shays (R-CT)

Donate to the PAC today by using
the enclosed envelope.

PAC Update

