

Arts Action News

THE NEWSLETTER OF AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS ACTION FUND

Vol. III 2008

Vote smART on Election Day

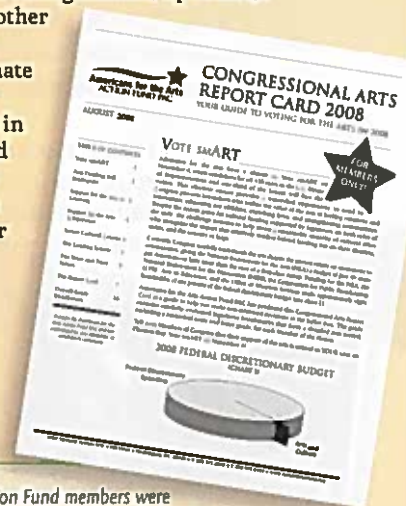
From early outreach to the presidential candidates to our recent congressional Candidate Survey on the Arts, Americans for the Arts Action Fund is working to ensure that the arts are a key issue in the 2008 elections. Our ArtsVote2008 initiative has already garnered more media attention for the arts during the current presidential campaign than ever before. We're now ready to arm you with the information you need to identify and vote for arts-friendly candidates this fall.

The Arts Action Fund recently distributed its 2008 Candidate Survey on the Arts in every open congressional race, and the candidates' answers are streaming back to us now. View the survey results at www.ArtsActionFund.org/sc/candidatesurvey. Additionally, you can find arts voting records for all incumbent candidates in the newly released 2008 Congressional Arts Report Card that was mailed to you in September.

Don't forget to vote on November 4 and use your Arts Action Fund tools to help you vote smart for the arts!

2008 Congressional Arts Report Card

Just released: our 2008 Congressional Arts Report Card. The good news? This year 46 percent of the members of the House of Representatives received a grade of "A" or "A+" on their arts voting records, up from 42 percent in 2006. In another positive development, membership in the Senate Cultural Caucus, a key tracker of arts support in the Senate, has reached an all-time high of 34, a full one-third of the Senate. Because of your support of the Arts Action Fund's work, support for the arts at the federal level is growing. Thank you!



All current Americans for the Arts Action Fund members were mailed a copy of this report card in September. To view the report card, visit www.ArtsActionFund.org/sc/2008reportcard.



(L-R) Executive Director of The United States Conference of Mayors Tom Cochran; Miami Mayor Manny Diaz; Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann; Gloria Estefan; Emilio Estefan; Trenton Mayor Douglas Palmer; Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels; Executive Director of the Arts Action Fund Nina Ozlu Tunceli; Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman; and Providence, RI Mayor David Cicilline after the presentation of the arts awards at The U.S. Conference of Mayors Annual Convention in Miami.

Powerful Voices for the Arts



"I want to make to you a hard-headed case for the arts." So began innovation expert Daniel Pink in his Americans for the Arts lecture at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts on the eve of Arts Advocacy Day 2008. Pink explained his belief that

while logical, linear, sequential, and analytical abilities are still necessary in today's work world, it's other abilities that make the most difference. "Artistry, creativity—these are the abilities that matter most in any kind of industry," said Pink. Listen to Pink deliver the 21st Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Arts Policy at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/go/DanielPink.

Voices for the Arts, continued on p.2



Message from the President

With the 2008 election season in full swing, I'm proud to say that support for the arts is growing, thanks to Americans for the Arts Action Fund and arts advocates like you.

We are seeing more coverage of the arts in campaigns and stronger support for the arts in responses to our Candidate Survey on the Arts. We're also seeing stronger support for the arts in Congress, with more members earning "A" or "A+" on their arts voting records in our 2008 Congressional Arts Report Card.

This growing support for the arts is no accident. It's because people like

you have invested in making pro-arts voices heard. We recently reached a major milestone when the number of Americans for the Arts online activists reached 100,000! That means growing clout for the arts on Capitol Hill and in state houses across the country. Thank you for helping to make it possible!

We are also strengthening our national activist base through key partnerships with other arts organizations. We recently joined forces with the MENC: the National Association for Music Education. This will allow thousands of members of MENC's Music Friends

program to choose to opt in as Arts Action Fund advocates promoting arts funding and arts-friendly policies at the local, state, and national levels.

You are an essential part of all we do to continue building our arts advocacy movement. Thank you for all your work to ensure the arts remain vital in America today and for generations to come. And thank you especially for your support of the Arts Action Fund.

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Pink is just one of many influential leaders who have raised their voices in support of the arts and arts education this past year. At the Americans for the Arts Annual Convention in June, Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter spoke to 1,400 attendees about his strong support for the arts.

"Art and culture are not just about pretty pictures and performances and creativity of the artists," said Nutter, "This is an economic engine for Philadelphia and for our region. Thousands of people depend on their livelihood based on what goes on in the arts and culture communities."

Democratic political strategist Donna Brazile, the first African-American woman to lead a major presidential campaign, also spoke in Philadelphia. Brazile expressed her admiration for the hundreds of arts leaders in the room. "Thank you for nourishing the minds and souls and spirits of so many kids. Especially those kids who were born into this world thinking they had nothing until they showed up at school, and their teacher handed them a paint brush or a saxophone, and they learned they had something to offer this world."

Each year, Americans for the Arts honors dynamic leaders in arts education, innovation, and advocacy. This June, in conjunction with The United States Conference of Mayors, Americans for the Arts presented some of the 2008 Public Leadership in the Arts Awards in Miami. This year's honorees were Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman, Missouri Gov. Matt Blunt, singer/songwriter Gloria Estefan, and musician/producer Emilio Estefan, Jr.

"Mayor Goodman and Gov. Blunt's support of the arts exemplify how investment in the arts translates into community growth, prosperity, and vitality," said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "Their leadership in the arts should be an inspiration to all public office figures." Gloria and Emilio Estefan were honored for their ability to bring together various cultures through the power of music.

Americans for the Arts also presented key public leadership awards in July at the National Lieutenant Governors Association's annual conference in Buffalo, NY. Wisconsin Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton received the Lieutenant Governors Arts Leadership Award for her role in advancing the arts in Wisconsin.

You can read more about these honorees and the other awards presented to outstanding arts leaders at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/news/press/2008/2008_07_18.asp.



During Americans for the Arts' 21st annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy, author Dan Pink made a persuasive case linking arts education to the kind of brain development needed to build creative and innovative thinking skills for 21st-century jobs.

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, please visit www.AmericansForTheArts.org/LegislativeNews.

Federal Appropriations Update

As Congress departed for the summer work period, much of the federal budget appropriations process was put on hold in both the House and Senate. While the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee passed a \$15.3 million FY 2009 budget increase for the National Endowment for the Arts, the Senate has not concluded its work. At this point, Congress is expected to temporarily fund the government at FY 2008 levels with a continuing resolution, leaving further appropriations decisions until after the elections—making your vote for the arts this election year that much more important.

100,000 Online Activists and Growing!

When arts-related legislation is moving through Congress or the state legislatures, it's critically important to mobilize citizen voices quickly. The Arts Action Fund's E-Advocacy Center, which has been helping a multitude of arts advocates across the country, reached a major milestone this summer

when the number of online activists hit 100,000 people from all 50 states! Launched in 2004, the site has helped advocates send more than 581,000 letters and e-mails to federal, state, and local leaders during the last four years. Whether we're pressing for increased funding for the arts or advancing arts-friendly legislation, the growing number of activists on this site gives us far greater voice. If you haven't signed up yet, what are you waiting for? Join now at www.capwiz.com/artsusa/mlm/signup.

Artist Deduction Bill Gaining Momentum

Legislation to allow artists to take a fair-market value tax deduction for work they donate to nonprofit institutions is gaining momentum in Congress. So far, 108 co-sponsors have signed on to H.R. 1524 in the House—breaking the record number set in 2004. There are also a record number of co-sponsors in the Senate, with 30 co-sponsors signing on to S. 548. It is also of note that Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama has stated that he would sign this bill into law if elected.

Supporting Arts Advocacy in States and Cities

Minnesota Initiative Brings Arts and the Environment Together

Vote Yes Minnesota, a coalition of more than 200 arts and environmental groups, is united behind a ballot measure facing Minnesota voters this fall. The Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment would increase state sales tax by three-eighths of one percent, generating \$290 million a year. Eighty percent of the funds would go to conserving land, water, trails, and parks, and a significant 20 percent is earmarked for the arts. The Vote Yes Minnesota coalition is receiving kudos for bridging the divide among organizations competing for precious state dollars. As Executive Director of Minnesota Citizens for the Arts Shelia Smith said, "We're all passionate about Minnesota. We love this place, and we want to take care of it." To learn more, visit www.yesformn.org.



Advocates Increase Efforts to Protect the Arts in State Budgets Nationwide

With the economy faltering, the arts are facing proposed state budget cuts all over the country. Member organizations of

Americans for the Arts' State Arts Action Network are increasing their advocacy efforts to minimize these cuts.

The Alliance of New York State Arts Organizations has helped create an arts-friendly climate at the top levels of state government, which led to Gov. David Patterson's proposal to include a \$30 million capital grants program for arts and culture organizations in his FY 2009 budget.

The Illinois Arts Alliance's advocacy efforts helped to restore \$4 million in key arts grants and maintained funding at FY 2008 levels for the Illinois Arts Council—despite an initial veto from the governor.

In North Carolina, ARTS North Carolina was able to save nearly all of its requested \$2 million in arts funding from the state legislature's proposed cuts.

And in New Jersey, ArtPride New Jersey's advocacy efforts recovered arts funding increases that had originally been cut in Gov. Jon Gorzine's initial proposed budget.



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Your Quarterly Arts Action Fund Newsletter

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Supporting Pro-Arts Candidates

PAC Update



Supporting Pro-Arts Candidates in November's Elections

Our Arts Action Fund PAC has distributed the first round of contributions to candidates in key congressional races. Thanks to your PAC contributions, we

have been able to donate \$65,000 to more than 100 House candidates and \$8,500 to 11 Senate candidates. Donations focus primarily on incumbents with proven records in support of the arts and candidates in open-seat races who have submitted positive responses to our Candidate Survey on the Arts. For more information on our candidate survey, visit www.ArtsActionFund.org/sc/candidatesurvey.

2008 Candidate Survey on the Arts

Here's a sample of questions we asked to congressional candidates in our 2008 Candidate Survey on the Arts:

1. What arts activities have you attended, participated in, or supported in the last year?
2. Do you support a significant funding increase for the National Endowment for the Arts so that organizations in your district can present higher quality arts programs for all of its citizens?
3. Do you support strengthening arts education and research through the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act?

Upcoming Events

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

October 6, 2008

5:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.
Arts Action Fund Fundraiser
New York City

November 11, 2008

5:45 p.m.–6:30 p.m.
Arts Action Fund Reception and Fundraiser
National Arts Marketing Project Conference
Hilton—Americas
Houston, TX

Americans for the Arts Action Fund is the advocacy arm of Americans for the Arts. We engage 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 to supporters of the Arts Action Fund. Executive Director, Nina Ozlu Tunceli. www.ArtsActionFund.org.