

WASHINGTON – Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28) today honored the 50th Anniversary of Americans for the Arts, the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in the United States by introducing a resolution on the House floor paying homage to the leadership and training they provide to local public and nonprofit arts groups across the country.

Today Slaughter, Co-Chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus and a longtime advocate for increased funding for the arts, introduced and spoke on a resolution to that honors the anniversary of the Americans for the Arts, [H.Res 1582](#) . A vote on the resolution will take place in the House tomorrow.

Her prepared remarks are below.

Video of Slaughter speaking on the floor is available at : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y71Qp3anKgM>

For more on Slaughter’s leadership in arts advocacy, click [here](#) .

Congresswoman Slaughter’s Remarks

M. Speaker,

I rise today to honor the 50th anniversary of Americans for the Arts. As the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in the United States, Americans for the Arts continues to be dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for participation and enjoyment of all forms of the arts.

Founded in 1960 in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, the original mission was and continues to be to enhance support for the nonprofit arts. In 1965 Americans for the Arts played a key role in the establishment of the National Endowment for the Arts. A half century later Americans for the Arts continues to foster the arts at the local, state, and national level.

Under the remarkable stewardship of Robert Lynch for the last 25 years, Americans for the Arts has provided leadership and training to local public and nonprofit agencies through a national network of Arts and Business Councils, Business Committees for the Arts, local and state agencies, state arts advocacy organizations, and community-based cultural organizations across the country serving 5,000 local arts agencies and their communities.

Research by Americans for the Arts measured the economic impact of the arts, which was a wonderful piece of work and gave us a lot of ammunition on the Arts Caucus, that showed that approximately 100,000 nonprofit cultural organizations generate \$166.2 billion in economic activity every year – now that is a great return on not a lot of money -- supporting 5.7 million jobs. In my congressional district alone, there are over 1,200 arts-related businesses employing almost 16,000 people.

In addition to fostering arts jobs in our local communities, they have worked to promote the importance of Arts Education in our public schools. Young people who regularly participate in arts programming are more likely to have better attendance records, to be involved in their school government, excel in their academics, and develop the creative and innovative skills necessary to compete for us to compete safely in the global workforce.

Through national events like Arts Advocacy Day, Americans for the Arts, brings national attention to the importance of arts throughout our nation. The arts define our culture and instill unique character in the communities across our nation. Art transcends barriers of language, time, and generation, translating cultural differences, breathing life into history, and bridging experiences across cultures. They accomplish the seemingly impossible task of both revealing our differences across the globe, while managing to illuminate all that connect us.

I thank Americans for the Arts and all their wonderful staff and all the people that have devoted their working careers to this noble effort and for their wonderful, fine achievements over the past 50 years. I am sure that the next 50 will be filled with even more accomplishments, and that we will all continue to enjoy the richness that the arts provide to each of our lives.

Thank you very much. I yield back the balance of my time.