

Says the Arts Matter to our Economy, Culture and Future

WASHINGTON – Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28), Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee and Co-Chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus today released the following statement made to supporters of the arts who had traveled to Capitol Hill for Arts Advocacy Day.

According to Americans for the Arts, the arts industry has a vast impact on the nation's economy. Each year, the arts industry generates \$166.2 billion annually in economic activity, provides 5.7 million full-time jobs, creates \$104.2 billion in household income, and generates almost \$17 billion in state and local revenue and \$12.6 billion in federal income tax revenue. In New York's 28th Congressional District, the arts industry supports 1,414 arts-related businesses that employ 16,145 people.

Speaking to the arts advocates gathered on Capitol Hill, Slaughter said, “A country that can spend \$8 billion a month for 10 years on a war can afford a little money for the National Endowment for the Arts.”

She continued, “The greatest treasures in this country are the people who create, and move us forward - the people who spark the creation that leaves behind the things that tell us who we were, who we are, and who we hope to be.”

Slaughter has been a long-time champion of the Arts Community leading the annual fight to increase the federal commitment to the arts. For more on her work to support the arts, click [her e.](#)

Slaughters full remarks can be seen [here](#) .

Her remarks as prepared for delivery are provided below.

Thank you all for coming today. I'm absolutely, firmly committed to the fact that Washington is a much nicer place when you, our friends from the arts, are in town.

Those of you who work everyday to advocate for the arts deserve our utmost respect and love. This is a strange time, although many of us have gone through something similar before. We remember that in 1994 when many Members of Congress were elected just to destroy the National Endowments for the Arts. □ We've overcome that, largely with the help of the Conference of Mayors and the Association of Counties.□ When they found out an incredible economic engine the arts are, they knew they could not lose the national endowment of the arts.□

One thing I want you to remind the people you talk to today is that the money we put into the National Endowment to the Arts each year bring back over \$12 billion to the US Treasury.

We don't make any better investment than the arts. □ We don't get such a great return on investment anywhere else.□

A country that can spend \$8 billion dollars a month for 10 years on a war can afford a little money for the National Endowment for the Arts.□

Last night was an extraordinary evening, we got to hear from a magnificent actor, Kevin Spacey, who gave one of the best speeches that I have ever heard, talking about the arts, and showing that the arts truly matter.

We know that the arts matter. To those of you who teach, you see it all the time. You see that spark that the arts creates in a child who didn't seem like they cared much until the arts, or who had problems in their life that they couldn't overcome until they got involved with artistic endeavors.

It is my firm belief that children who create do not destroy. Arts are some of the greatest

programs we can give to our children. □

There is a great mystery that I would love to solve. □ What does the arts do to us as human beings? If someone can explain to me why a series of notes and chords, and rest and tempo and the magnificent lyrics called “Amazing Grace” can bring us all to tears. □ What is that spark in all of us that cries out for beauty, for humanity, for the companionship that we are given from the arts? □

Art does not need to apologize to anyone for anything. The greatest treasures in this country are the people who create, and move us forward- the people who spark the creation that leave behind the things that tell us who we were, who we are, and who we hope to be.