

## Issues - Arts

### Arts

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Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY) and Rep. Christopher Shays (R-CT) are co-chairs of the Congressional Arts Caucus, a bipartisan organization for Members of Congress who support the arts through federal initiatives. Each year, the Arts Caucus's major objective is to secure adequate funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Institute for Museums and Library Services (IMLS).

Members participate in press conferences in support of the arts, testify before key committees in support of these cultural agencies, speak on the House floor about the positive educational and economic impact of the arts, and participate in the events of Arts Advocacy Day, an annual March event. Most important, the Arts Caucus also wages an annual fight to preserve NEA funding.

As longtime co-chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus, Rep. Slaughter leads the annual fight to increase the federal commitment to the arts and humanities. Recently, on May 18, 2006, Rep. Slaughter offered an amendment to the FY07 Interior Appropriations bill to increase National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) funding by \$5 million each. The amendment passed by a voice vote for the second year in a row.

"This is a great victory for the arts, for our children, and for our economy," said Rep. Slaughter. "An investment in the arts is an investment in our nation's economy and our nation's future. The arts industry creates millions of jobs and generates billions in economic activity each year. During this period of record joblessness and a slumping economy, our relatively small investment in the NEA and NEH will give us an enormous return - creating desperately needed jobs and revenue for local governments."

According to Americans for the Arts, the arts industry has a vast impact on the nation's economy. Each year, the arts industry generates \$134 billion annually in economic activity, provides 4.9 million full-time jobs, creates \$89.4 billion in household income, and generates almost \$14 billion in state and local revenue and \$10.5 billion in federal income tax revenue. For example, in Niagara Falls, the arts industry supports 1,637 full time jobs, generates over \$23 million in household income and creates over \$6 million in state and local government revenue.

Currently, the Caucus includes 157 Members of the House of Representatives. [Click here](#) for a list of the 110th Congressional Arts Caucus members.