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THE POWER, PERIL, AND PROMISE OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS
UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

HEARING HELD
JANUARY 19, 2022



Small Business Committee Document Number 117–043
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THE POWER, PERIL, AND PROMISE OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2022

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:00 a.m., in Room 2360, Rayburn House Office Building and via Zoom, Hon. Dean Phillips [member of the Committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Phillips, Golden, Mfume, Delgado, Craig, Davids, Newman, Bourdeaux, Chu, Evans, Houlahan, Kim of New Jersey, Luetkemeyer, Williams, Stauber, Meuser, Tenney, Garbarino, Young Kim of California, Van Duyne, and Fitzgerald.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Good morning. I call this hearing to order.

Without objection, the Chair is authorized to declare a recess at any time.

And I would like to begin as we always do now to note some important requirements. Let me begin by saying that standing House and Committee rules and practice will continue to apply during remote proceedings. House regulations require the Members to be visible through a video connection throughout the proceeding, so please keep your cameras on and remain muted until you are recognized to minimize background noise.

In the event a Member encounters technical issues that prevent him or her from being recognized for their questioning, I will move to the next available Member of the same party and I will recognize that Member at the next appropriate time slot provided they have returned to the proceeding. Should a Member's time be interrupted by technical issues, I will recognize that Member at the next appropriate slot for the remainder of their time once their issues have been resolved. In the event of technical issues, I may need to recess the proceedings to address them.

And with that, let's turn to today's business.

I want to thank all of our witnesses for being here today. It is a pleasure to have such a talented and accomplished group of witnesses representing the arts sector. As you can see, I am sitting in for Chairwoman Velázquez, who was unable to Chair this hearing today.

The arts sector, an important sector, employs nearly 5.2 million Americans and contributes $919 billion to our national economy. In my congressional district, the influence of the creative economy is all over the place. Writers, photographers, musicians, and designers launch small businesses, employ workers, and help Minnesota make it great through their art.

But the impact of the arts economy is not confined to America's largest cities. It is evident in every part of the country. America's 675,000 art-centered businesses are present in every congressional district throughout the nation. Unfortunately, the pandemic has touched nearly every business in the arts economy.

Creative businesses and workers usually rely on in-person gatherings and live events to sustain their enterprises. However, as the virus spread throughout the country, lead Americans to stay home and socially distance. Ninety-nine percent of entertainment productions canceled events throughout the pandemic so far, resulting in a loss of $557 million in ticketed admissions alone. At the height of the pandemic, 63 percent of creative workers experienced unemployment and 95 percent lost creative income.

The live events industry is a crucial component of the creative economy that has struggled greatly throughout the pandemic. This industry comprises not only theatres and music venues, but also musicians and performers and those that support live events such as planners, caterers, designers, and so much more. These workers and small businesses have seen precipitous declines in revenue due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and related public health concerns, with countless events and gatherings being canceled or delayed for now the third year in a row.

To help mitigate the impact of the pandemic on this industry, Congress created the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program, known as SVOG, as many have come to know it. To date, the program has delivered over $13 billion in grants to struggling venues throughout the country. This funding has helped many businesses, including several in my district, avoid permanent closure.

However, SVOG was not accessible to the many independent contractors and small business owners that comprise the broader live events industry, leaving them totally out in the cold. Last August, I held a listening session with business owners in the live events industry in Minnesota and heard heartbreaking stories of dreams delayed and hardships faced. And 5 months later, Congress has yet to take action.

It is crucial that we pass additional small business targeted relief to help those small businesses most impacted by the growing ongoing pandemic, including those in the live events industry itself. These funds would help business owners keep their doors open and workers employed, and it would help strengthen our economic recovery as well with the understanding that arts and culture are the second-highest sector for value added per dollar in the United States' economy.

It is important to note as well, the benefits of the arts go well beyond economic. They have a substantial impact on our country's social, civic, and cultural well-being. Alongside preserving and celebrating culture, research shows that as creative and artistic enterprises arise, ancillary businesses are more likely to form around them, creating jobs and stimulating local economies.

But the wounds the pandemic inflicted on the arts economy are deep and painful and potentially long lasting. If we want the industry to return to pre-COVID trends and continue to be an economic engine for local communities, these businesses need more support and investment. Investing in the creative economy will help this

crucial sector recover while also fueling overall economic growth for the United States.

So today, I hope this hearing allows us to examine the challenges that those operating in the creative economy continue to face. I also look forward to discussing policies that can help support this important sector to all of us.

With that, I would like to yield to the Ranking Member, Mr. Luetkemeyer, for his opening statement.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I appreciate you filling in for the Chairwoman this morning.

As COVID-19 continues to disrupt daily lives, we have seen Americans double down on their cultural and creative consumption to regain a sense of normalcy. In addition to the creative arts ability to provide individuals with comfort, joy, and even hope during the challenging times, the arts can also ignite economic growth and recovery after hardship strikes. Creative organizations and enterprises are revenue and job generators not only within their immediate sphere but also act as a catalyst, stimulating economic activity in adjacent sectors such as tourism, hospitality, transportation, restaurants, and many others. Culture and the arts are not confined only to metropolitan areas. In fact, rural and heartland communities also have their own significant reservoirs of homegrown creative assets that can be mobilized for social, cultural, and economic good.

Nationwide, the creative economy generated an impressive 4.3 percent of our nation's gross domestic product, or $919.7 billion in 2019. The creative arts employed nearly 5.2 million workers prior to the pandemic, accounting for nearly 3.3 percent of the United States' workforce.

Unfortunately, this industry has not been immune to the COVID-19 crisis. During the worst of the pandemic, nearly all entertainment events were canceled creating significant financial losses across the board of businesses themselves, local governments, and adjacent businesses reliant on their success.

At the same time, employment in this sector plunged, and while there has been some increase, workers in the creative arts sphere remain among some of the most heavily affected with 11 percent more unemployment rates than compared to pre-pandemic levels.

2021 ushered in a tentative rebound in the creative sector over the past year. However, there are several major stressors threatening to reverse this fragile recovery. The Omicron variant of the corona-virus threatens to usher in a new wave of closures and restrictions devastating to arts industries reliant on human interaction. The meteoric rise in inflation is manifesting in higher supply costs, threatening businesses whose financial cap is already severely strained for weathering a 2-year pandemic, wage hikes, and rents locking in at higher prices. Unlike large businesses who may have deeper financial reserves, small businesses are often financed by owners' personal savings placing them in grave personal financial risk during periods of high inflation.

Increased inflation means less buying power which in turn translates to a decreased ability to hire and retain qualified employees. Unfortunately, with last week's Consumer Price Index reading of 7 percent and the wholesale inflation rising to 9.7 percent year over

year, a challenging economic environment for small business will continue. Unlike other industries who may be able to take advantage of automation and technology to replace people, the creative arts rely deeply on human skill and ingenuity.

As a sitting Member of Congress and Ranking Member of this Committee, it is my distinct honor and privilege to welcome our witnesses today. I would like to thank all of you for participation. I look forward to your conversation.

Mr. Chairman, with that I yield back.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Thank you, Mr. Luetkemeyer.

And now I would like to take a moment to explain how the hearing will proceed. Each witness will have 5 minutes to provide a statement and each Committee Member will have 5 minutes for questioning. Please ensure that your microphone is on when you begin speaking and that you please return to mute when you are finished.

With that, I would like to introduce our witness for the day.

Our first witness Mr. Carson Elrod. Mr. Elrod has been a fierce activist in the creative sector, most notably as a cofounder and coleader and director of Government Affairs for Arts Workers United, Be An #ArtsHero. Arts Workers United is an arts advocacy organization dedicated to establishing the arts and culture sector of the United States by means of support, investment, and representation. When he is not championing for arts and culture workers, Mr. Elrod is a professional actor who has appeared in live theater, motion pictures, on Broadway, and much more.

We welcome you, Mr. Elrod.

Our second witness is Ms. Nataki Garrett. A change maker and trailblazer, Ms. Garrett is a nationally recognized director and the sixth artistic director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF). The first woman to artistically lead a $44 million theater company and OSF's first Black female in the role. Prior to her role at OSF, she served as our acting artistic director at the Denver Center Theater Company, as well as associate dean and the co-head of the Undergraduate Acting Program at the CalArts School of Theater. We welcome you, Ms. Garrett.

Our third witness is Ms. Sandra Karas. Ms. Karas has married her passion of arts and advocacy, serving as the secretary Treasurer of Actors' Equity Association, a union of professional stage actors and stage managers in the United States. She is a licensed tax and finance attorney and serves as the director of the New York City Volunteer Income tax assistance program, sits on the Board of Directors of the New York Local of Screen Actors Guild, American Federation of television and radio artists, and is even an actor herself.

We welcome you, Ms. Karas.

And now I would like to yield to the Ranking Member, Mr. Luetkemeyer, to introduce our final witness.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Our next witness is Ms. Reanne Presley. She is a co-owner of Presleys' Country Jubilee Theater and Branson Visitor TV. Presleys' Theater is a multi-generational, family-owned business and was the original live music theater in Branson, Missouri, Hosting its first show on June 30, 1967. In addition to being a small busi-

ness owner, Ms. Presley is a devoted community leader. She became the first woman elected Mayor of Branson in 2007 and went on to serve 4 terms. She has previously served as branch of City Council, all of them for 10 years. Prior to her government service, Ms. Presley was Chair of the Missouri Tourism Commission and served in leadership positions on several community boards, including as Chair of the board of directors at Skaggs Community Hospital and Board of Directors of the Springfield and Branson National Airport, and the Branson Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce. Due to her hard work and exemplary leadership skills, Ms. Presley was honored as the recipient of the Missourian award in 2009. In addition to her sending her own views as a small business owner, Ms. Presley is here representing a National Independent Venues Association (NIVA), formed in mid-April of 2020 in response to the ill effects of the COVID-pandemic. NIVA Members include many small, independent venues, promoters, and festivals across the entire nation.

Ms. Presley, it is a pleasure having you testify before this committee. I look forward to your valuable insights I know you will provide today. It is good to see you again. Ms. Presley and I, just for clarification purposes, worked together when I was the Division of Tourism Director in the State of Missouri and she was the leader in the Brandon area for all of the different tourism activities and venues there. So it is great to see you again, Reanne and welcome to the Committee.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. PHILLIPS. We are going to expect you to sing a song, Mr. Ranking Member.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Well, that is a good way to have us send everybody off.

Mr. PHILLIPS. For short hearings. Anyway, thank you, sir. Thank you to all our witnesses for being here today.

And with that, I now recognize Mr. Elrod for your opening statement for 5 minutes.

STATEMENTS OF CARSON ELROD, CO-FOUNDER & CO-LEADER, BE AN #ARTSHERO, DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, ARTS WORKERS UNITED; NATAKI GARRETT, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL; SANDRA KARAS, SECRETARY-TREASURER, ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION; RAEANNE PRESLEY, CO-OWNER, PRESLEYS' COUNTRY JUBILEE (PRESLEYS' THEATER)

STATEMENT OF CARSON ELROD

Mr. ELROD. Thank you, sir. Chairman Phillips, Ranking Member Luetkemeyer, esteemed Members of the Small Business Committee, thank you so much for your invitation to join today's groundbreaking hearing.

I am an arts worker. I am a professional actor and one of the 5.2 million Americans that animate our creative economy. Arts workers like me support over 673,000 businesses, many of them small, that add $919 billion in value to our nation's economy. That is five times more than agriculture and nearly $300 billion more than all of transportation.

We are big business because we are local business, from Kansas to Kentucky and Alaska to Alabama. Every state in the union is home to tens of thousands of arts workers whose labor contributes more than a billion dollars to each state's GSP.

Our arts institutions are like stars that anchor a dynamic solar system of ancillary businesses. You build a theater or a museum and you can watch hotels, restaurants, and other small businesses grow up around them. The socioeconomic light of our creative businesses strengthens communities and stimulates their economies.

Our nation's creative economy is in peril. In January of 2020, I had just been cast in a role in a television show that promised to be a gamechanger for me both professionally and financially. On March 13, 2020, that job evaporated and I joined 2.7 million of my fellow arts workers for 15 months of total unemployment. During this time, I joined Brooke Ishibashi, Jenny Grace Makholm, and Matthew-Lee Erlbach in starting Be An #ArtsHero and Arts Workers United to relentlessly campaign for federal relief, recovery, and a hearing just like this one.

I was grateful to Congress for the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program, but even as the pandemic persists, that pandemic relief, like my jobs, has evaporated. And without union work, I lost my union health insurance. For the first time in my life I am on Medicaid. My last show got canceled because I, with my cast, caught COVID. I had an upcoming show this spring. It has been canceled because of COVID.

My story is not unique. While I had some savings and the privilege to dedicate my life to this advocacy, so many, especially in the BIPOC, LGBTQ+ and disabled communities have been disproportionately impacted by this pandemic and they do not have it as good as I do. And I think I have it pretty bad.

I am still haunted by a conversation I had with Patsy Bouressa from the SIMS Foundation in Austin, Texas. They provide mental health services for music workers. In just 1 month, four of their clients became so hopeless that they killed themselves. We cannot let the human infrastructure of our creative economy vanish into other industries or worse. The loss to our families, our culture, our communities, and future generations and the economy would be incalculable.

Arts workers should be the backbone of our post-COVID recovery. The creative economy is a jobs multiplier with a normal growth rate of 4.45 percent. That is nearly double that of the rest of the economy. And the human need to gather, to find community, to share cultural experiences will be enormous after this pandemic. Congress can translate that need into strategic investments that will jumpstart the American recovery built on imagination, innovation, creativity, and community. To accomplish this, I recommend that:

Congress commission a GAO report to fully explore what Congress can and should do to stabilize and stimulate the creative economy.

Ensure that unemployed American arts workers retain unemployment benefits so that arts workers can stay arts workers.

Immediately pass the Performing Arts Tax Parity Act, the Create the Place, that HITS Arts, the Arts Education for All Act, the Cre-

ative Economy Revitalization Act, and the 21st Century Federal Writers Project.

Finally, Congress should work with the president to create a secretary of Arts and Culture.

You have the opportunity to ignite not just a sunrise but a supernova of creative small businesses, triggering a chain reaction of such socioeconomic prosperity that history will remember this Congress as the Congress that provided the rocket fuel needed to launch us into the new American century defined by the incredible specialized labor of American arts workers and the 21st Century American Creative Economy that they drive. Thank you so much.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Thank you, Mr. Elrod.

And now I would like to recognize Ms. Garrett for 5 minutes for your opening statement. Ms. Garrett?

STATEMENT OF NATAKI GARRETT

Ms. GARRETT. Thank you very much for recognizing me, Chairwoman Velázquez, Representative Phillips, Ranking Member Luetkemeyer, and the Members of the Committee. I want to thank you for inviting me to appear before you today.

I am the artistic director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, otherwise known as OSF. I am honored to be with you and share how COVID-19 has affected the arts sector, specifically OSF, to highlight our economic and social impact and to offer ways Congress can support the recovery of the creative economy.

Founded in 1935, OSF is a Member of the National Theater Communication Groups and the Performing Arts Alliance. Prior to the pandemic we were a $44 million flagship nonprofit theater and one of the largest economic drivers of the southern rural Oregon economy. In a typical year, we welcomed over 400,000 people from all over the world to the town of Ashland, Oregon, a town of 20,000 people that has the same density of restaurants and hotels per resident as New York and Paris. OSF generates more than a quarter billion dollars of economic activity in the region annually, and we are responsible for a full 20 percent of its economic activity overall. Simply put, the arts are a powerful economic engine that drives our region.

In March of 2020, we had just opened our season, my first as artistic director. Within 6 days of opening, COVID forced us to shut it all down. We had already spent about $20 million to get the shows ready for the stage and patrons had paid more than $6 million for tickets that had to now be refunded. And over the next few weeks, 90 percent of OSF's nearly 500 employees, including actors, crewmembers, carpenters, box office staff, craft artisans were laid off. Eight hundred twenty-nine performances of our 11 scheduled productions were shuttered and 2,300 community engagement and education events were canceled. Within a month, we laid off 500. That 500 led to 5,000 in our town and 20,000 across the region.

In September of the same year, the Alameda fire struck through the region and destroyed more than 2,000 homes and businesses, including the homes of some of the remaining OSF employees. We set up a food bank, provided emergency housing, and dedicated a significant part of our annual gala to the relief effort.

I am haunted by the choices I had to make to keep OSF afloat. But it is even more difficult for the culturally-specific and smaller venue or community-based arts organizations and their arts workers. Their work has a huge impact on the creative economy and often goes under resourced. I think about the hundreds of thousands of artists around this country who drive so much of our economy but themselves live in poverty. How can we continue viewing an industry that makes up more of our GDP than agriculture and mining combined as a luxury or a purview of the elite? How do we look millions of arts and cultural workers in this country in the eye and not take simple, common sense steps to simultaneously make their lives and our economy more secure and robust? How can we continue cutting arts programs in schools when we know that students who participate in arts education are more likely to go to college and less likely to go to jail? The reality is that the infusion of federal dollars, along with the generosity of our donors and patrons, without that it is likely that I would not be here today because OSF would not be here today. I am very thankful for the assistance this Committee provided through the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program, formerly known as SOS and other forms of COVID relief.

At OSF, we have a tradition. Following the curtain call of our last outdoor play each season, every person in the company carries a candle and silently enters a darkened theater to the strains of Greensleeves. A veteran company Members speaks Prospero's speech from act IV Scene 1 of The Tempest. It is like a prayer. "Our revels now have ended … " It is a promise, 1,200 audience Members from all walks of life hang on every line. The candles are extinguished and the company silently and reverently exits the theater. It marks the ending of a season of hard work and beautiful art making and the promise that the house lights will be rekindled once more.

In 2020, I was afraid that those candles had gone out forever. But I am here to tell you that we will make sure that the creative economy endures. As an artistic director, I am committed to ensuring that those candles burn bright and those words are spoken for years to come.

The power you hold, you can assure the flickering candle of the creative economy can continue to burn bright. Right now, bills such as the Creative Economy Revitalization Act and the Performing Arts Parity Act and the Arts for Education for All Act, bipartisan bills that positively impact the economies of every state and enjoy broad public support, are waiting for Congress to act. It is not a radical act, nor is it controversial. It is recognizing a simple fact that the arts and the artists drive local economies and at the same time lift people out of darkness.

I thank you for this time and thank you for what you will do next. And I look forward to your questions. Thank you very much.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Thank you so much, Ms. Garrett.

And now I would like to recognize Ms. Karas for 5 minutes for your opening statement. Ms. Karas?

STATEMENT OF SANDRA KARAS

Ms. KARAS. Chairman Phillips, Ranking Member Luetkemeyer, thank you for the invitation today. I am Sandra Karas, an actor, Secretary-Treasurer of Actors' Equity Association, and a Member of SAG-AFTRA's New York local board. I also appear before you as a small business owner. I am a tax attorney, accountant, and financial advisor with a practice here in New York. You are going to hear today about the power of the creative economy, and the live arts in particular, rightly so. The arts and culture sector is responsible for 5.2 million jobs and 4.3 percent of the GDP. The live arts have a huge halo effect on small business, many of which would not exist without the arts. Patrons spend on restaurants, parking, taxis, hotels, childcare. Nationally, that amounts to more than $100 billion in additional spending.

The creative economy drives revenue growth for business and workers. The reason, unions. I am speaking to you today on behalf of Actors' Equity Association, the union of actors and stage managers in the live theater. Our Members work across the country Los Angeles' 99-seat non-profits, to Kansas City's Starlight Theater and St. Louis' Rep, to Buffalo's Kavinoky Theater, and the Wintergarden on Broadway, and everywhere in between. Our contracts include healthcare and pensions. As the original gig workers, we are the proof that companies need not choose between profits and W-2 employee protections.

The pandemic has indeed created a crisis. While many businesses have recovered, the new variant has brought tremendous uncertainty and job loss and a live arts performance once again just last week had closed in IRIS. Earnings and health insurance were put at risk. When live events close, the small businesses that depended on them also feel the crunch. There is one way you can help all of us arts workers. Congress has an opportunity to pass the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act (PATPA), which modernizes a provision enacted by President Ronald Reagan and will provide relief to entertainment workers. Performing artists pay a high percentage of their income on necessary out-of-pocket costs to look for work and stay current in the industry. We pay agents and managers, transportation to auditions, maintain our websites, headshots, video reels, and more. It can amount to 20 to 30 percent of our gross income. Previously this was deductible. Because of an unintended consequence of tax reform, we lost the deductions of our unreimbursed business expenses. This means a tax increase, often of thousands of dollars for working-class artists. I have seen heartbreaking stories at the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program, here at our Equity office, where volunteers process thousands of free tax returns annually for low-income arts workers. One young taxpayer, upon learning that his liability increased by more than 30 percent, wondered aloud how he was going to pay his rent.

As we return to work, the last thing we need is a tax code that punishes us for seeking work. This bill is targeted to low-income and middle-class taxpayers, not the high-earning stars.

I commend Representatives Chu and Buchanan for leading the effort to pass this bill in the House. Thank you, also to Representatives Newman and Garbarino for cosponsoring. I ask you all for

your support. PATPA is Equity's top legislative priority and it is endorsed by unions and employers. But it is not our only priority. We also released a federal policy agenda for inclusion in the arts, in partnership with our fellow arts unions. The National Endowment for the Arts should create a chief diversity officer to drive inclusion deeper into the grant process. And we strongly support the CROWN Act to end hair discrimination in our industry.

On behalf of all the arts unions, I want to thank the Small Business Committee for helping to make sure that unions were treated fairly during the pandemic by allowing access to the Paycheck Protection Program. Our staff worked harder than ever and this program was a lifeline to them and to our employers.

I will conclude today where I started. The arts sector is a robust contributor to our national economy because of a strong union presence, not in spite of it. In an industry where competition is keen and there are more workers than jobs, we ensure workers have a voice in their workplace, secure standards, and safe working conditions. That is why the PRO Act has our full support. It will reform outdated labor laws and protect against exploitation and employee misclassification, which is unfortunately far too common in our industry. It will help the arts and culture sector, and workers, prosper into the next century. That is the true promise of the creative economy.

I thank you for the privilege of appearing before you today.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Thank you, Ms. Karas.

And now, Ms. Presley, you are recognized for 5 minutes for your opening statement.

STATEMENT OF RAEANNE PRESLEY

Ms. PRESLEY. Good morning, Chairman Phillips, Ranking Member Luetkemeyer, and distinguished Members of this Committee. Thank you for inviting me to add my voice to today's hearing.

My name is Raeanne Presley and I join you from my home in Branson, Missouri. I am co-owner of Presleys' Country Jubilee, along with my husband Steve and in-laws, Gary and Pat Presley.

As a former mayor of Branson and former Chair of the Missouri Tourism Commission, I can attest that family friendly entertainment and the creative spirit is at the heart of our community.

In 1967, the Presley family opened the original show on Highway 76. Lloyd and Bessie Presley, along with their four children, dreamed of entertaining the fishermen and families with wholesome comedy and music. Opening Branson's first live music theater on a small, unpopulated two-lane road was risky but the Presley family was passionate about entertainment and determined to make their living at it. They exemplify the entrepreneurial spirit that drives our industry and helped to build our city.

This March, Presleys will open our 56th season. Our 1,500 seat theater which started with folding chairs has expanded nine times over the years. We now employ 70 people, produce more than 200 events each year, and have a weekly television show averaging 300,000 viewers. Our preshow features a gospel singalong in our mezzanine, ushers to take you to your seat, Coke, popcorn, and cinnamon nuts to enjoy. The heart of our show remains the same—

to provide lifelong family memories and opportunities for folks to forget their troubles for a time.

Many Branson venues, including Presleys, were fortunate to receive Shuttered Venue Operators Grants and PPP loans. We are grateful to our elected leaders, especially co-sponsors Representative Williams of this Committee, Representative Welch, and so many of you who have recognized that our industry matters. Without your support for the Save our Stages Act, I might not be here today to tell you about the challenges we face beyond the pandemic.

So let me just make sure to say thank you for this lifeline for our industry.

The reaction of our audience when we reopened showed just how much people need live entertainment. When the curtain went up on that opening song, the audience stood for a sustained standing ovation. I heard similar stories from venues coast-to-coast.

Our economy also needs live entertainment. A 2019 study showed that for every dollar spent at a small venue, $12 of economic activity was generated. While Branson's population is just over 12,000, our theater and music industry employs nearly 2,000 people and helps to bring an estimated 8.2 million visitors to our region each year. Nationally, more than 80 percent of adult travelers can be considered cultural tourists. They spend more, travel more often, and stay longer. Simply put, independent music venues and the creative arts are economic engines for communities nationwide.

Today, the rollercoaster ride of the pandemic continues. Traditionally, about 5 percent of ticket buyers do not attend a performance but now sagging consumer confidence is causing national no-show rates as high as 50 percent. This is devastating because most of our venues rely on in-house sales to pay core bills.

We are also now confronted with increased costs due to inflation. Just in the past month, I have received notices of impending price increases from our trash hauler to our concession suppliers to our janitorial service. And like many other businesses, we face the difficult challenge of finding workers in a competitive environment. Remote work is not an option for our business. It is especially challenging to compete with national employers who are able to offer higher starting wages. The passing of the Save Our Stages Act was a break we needed to survive the pandemic. Now in the face of increasingly difficult economic conditions, we are looking for the break we need in order to thrive.

I have seen the ability of the creative economy to bring Americans to their feet. Out of pure joy amidst the darkness of the pandemic, I have seen the power of the creative economy to transform a two-lane stretch of blacktop into a world-famous tourism destination.

Thank you for recognizing the importance of our industry and the value our small businesses add to communities across America. I urge you to keep the creative economy top of mind as you consider policies affecting small businesses.

Thank you for your time and leadership.

Mr. PHILLIPS. And thank you, Ms. Presley. And to all of our witnesses. We appreciate what you have shared with us and you

very much humanized an issue of great importance to all of us on this Committee and to our country.

Now I would like to begin by recognizing myself for 5 minutes. And Mr. Elrod, I would like to start with you. You have referenced the pendulum of openings and closings and stops and starts of so many entertainment businesses. And as you know better than anyone, the live events industry in particular has been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

So can you share a little bit more with all of us how are theater companies in particular responding to the chaos and disruptions of new openings and cancelations due to Omicron in particular?

Mr. ELROD. Well, I think I can speak to my own experience in that, you know, the show that I was working on this fall, The Alchemist for the Red Bull Theater Company was an off-Broadway show at the New World Stages in midtown Manhattan. And after 15 months of being completely and totally dark, finally Broadway was starting to come back. Off-Broadway was starting to come back. So here we were. It was a comedy. And despite the masks, things were starting to look up and come back to normal. But just a few weeks into our run we started to see the impacts of Omicron all across the city as different shows had different people calling out and especially on Broadway where shows are a little bit better resourced with understudies and covers and replacements for everybody in the building, even those most-resourced shows were facing challenges that were ending up putting shows on hiatus or closing them altogether. So we were kind of watching from the sideline and then on December 15th it came to us in the form of me coming to the theater with symptoms, taking a Rapid test, seeing a positive result, and three other people in the cast got it. And without the understudies, without the extra stagehands, the theater was faced with only one choice and that was to close the show completely. So it is very, very hard.

As Raeanne Presley said, remote work is not an option. We all have to be there in the building. And if we are sick, we cannot be in the building. And you can see the consequences writ-large all over the country anywhere people have to gather together in enclosed spaces.

Mr. PHILLIPS. I appreciate that and also your advocacy for more targeted relief dollars for an industry grappling with the challenges and in particular the actors and the artists that are so impacted. So thank you.

Ms. Garrett, you have noted that the Oregon Shakespeare Festival received $10 million I believe in SVOG funds and also $5 million in PPP funds. Could you share with the Committee in more detail how those allocations helped the organization survive?

Ms. GARRETT. Yes. If you can imagine at a $44 million organization, our spend rate was $5 million a month. And even when we had to shrink everything down to about 10 percent of our staff we were still going through a lot of money giving back tickets and revenue and that kind of a thing. And keeping our lights on and the doors open and all of that stuff. That resource is supporting all kinds of things including we were able to open a production last summer. We were able to do a production, our first winter production that opened and closed without any COVID-related closures,

thank God. But we are spending $200,000 a month on tests just to try to keep people aware of whether or not they are sick or not. We have a very kind of robust system around making sure that we do have a lot of people covering because closing for COVID was not a option for us to be able to open that show. And every time we do spend money at OSF to make sure that we keep going, we take the entire town with us. Everybody comes with us on that journey. So the restaurants are open because of the PPP money. The hotels are open because of the SVOG money. So in rural Oregon we are a complete ecology interconnected with one another. And so for every dollar that we received from the federal government, every resource, every single dime helped to make sure that we could buoy the entire region, especially through the fire. And now we have a little bit of resource to be able to hopefully open this spring. We are all crossing our fingers but this is with a lot of resource being spent in advance to get the shows open and a lot of resource being spent for testing.

Mr. PHILLIPS. And I thank you. I see my time is expiring so now I would like to recognize the Ranking Member, Mr. Luetkemeyer, for 5 minutes.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will start out with a question for Ms. Presley here. In your testimony here you talk a little bit about dealing with inflation, with rising costs, worker problems. Can you elaborate a little bit on that from the standpoint of how you are able to absorb those costs, how you are able to keep going? I know you mentioned the SVOG program as one of the ways to be helpful, and PPP. So can you paint a fuller picture for me, please?

Ms. PRESLEY. I am happy to, Congressman Luetkemeyer. Thank you again for allowing me to speak.

I would say that the uniqueness of a small business which there are millions, of course throughout our nation. Inflation is certainly going to impact in many ways as we look forward. While the PPP money and the Save Our Stages money was critical to keeping our employees on payroll this last year and to allow us to not borrow an enormous amount of money to keep open, uncertainty is the future.

In terms of inflation, my really only two options are to pass costs along to our customers or to diminish my customer experience. And while I am getting notices from some vendors about their increases in price, I also know that I will simply open bills come May and June and find that things cost more. Those are very real for all of our small business owners. And to remind you as a small business owner, we do not have a deep financial backstop. We are it and we each sign agreements with our banks and our lenders to put our homes on the line and our assets on the line. We are happy to do that. We are happy to grow our businesses. But it is difficult. And with the uncertainty with COVID it is unknown. We need consumer confidence to rally. We need people to feel safe and want to travel and spend their money on entertainment when they have other needs as well.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. You know, there is a limit and as a small businessperson, you know, you can price some of those increase into your higher ticket prices but there is a price point in which

your customer base is going to say no, we cannot afford this or no, we are not going to do this. Or they are going to cut back on the number of shows they go see. If you could elaborate. In Branson, you have an enormous number of shows and not only venues but a number of shows per day. And so a lot of people go there and they see multiple shows over 2 or 3 days. They are going to cut down on those number of shows if they raise price points. Have you looked at that, what the price point would be and how much it would affect not only yourself but your other venues there in Branson, how much of an increase they can sustain?

Ms. PRESLEY. Well, Branson has been built on very family-friendly, affordable entertainment. That is one of our hallmarks and we are proud of that. There are 37 theaters right now that host performances and that price point is frankly unknown. We will pass along some of the cost increases to our customers in increased ticket prices this next year. I wish I could say that I knew but I do know that human nature tells me that as we have seen at venues across the nation, people are going to not buy that extra t-shirt. They are maybe not going to have the merchandise to take home that they would have normally had. They may not buy as much concession stands or food and those are really vital things for our independent venues to help with the bottom line. I am hopeful that our customers will stay with us and realize that they want a quality product, and so far we have seen that to be the case but we are always looking for ways to make a family vacation affordable.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Thank you for that.

Ms. Garrett, you made a comment that really kind of stuck with me and that was the ripple effect of the SVOG program's dollars. You were saying that to keep your entertainment venue going it is not only important to the venue and the workers themselves but to the rest of the businesses in the area. And so would you like to elaborate a little bit more on that? I think it is a very important point. Ms. Garrett?

Ms. GARRETT. Yeah. Thank you very much for the question. OSF is in a rural area so we are a kind of interdependent ecology. Everything that we do affects everyone around us. And so when I said that we laid off 500 people and 5,000 people lost their jobs locally, you can imagine the impact. This is a place that people moved to with their families to work at OSF and other businesses around here. And with our tourism at a standstill, it was very difficult for people to keep their businesses open without OSF being open.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Thank you. I see my time has expired. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Thank you, sir.

And with that I now recognize Ms. Davids from Kansas, the Chair of the Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Tax, and Capital Access.

Ms. DAVIDS. Thank you, Chairman. And thank you everybody for attending. And then for those who are offering testimony today, I appreciate your time to talk about this important topic as it relates to importance of the creative arts sector for our small business community.

We are hearing about it, how hard the sector was hit and continues to be by this pandemic. And the artists and creative arts small businesses have had to work really hard to overcome some of the unique and particular challenges that are being faced. In Kansas, the arts sector makes up around 3 percent of our state's GDP and employs about 50,000 Kansans.

I feel like I do have to mention I have spent some summers going down to Branson and Lake of the Ozarks, too, reciate seeing you on here today, Ms. Presley.

But because of the importance to Kansas, I was really proud to be one of those folks to help create the Shuttered Venue Operators Grants program, providing directed relief to theaters and music venues and other performance venues.

Kansas small businesses received around $99 million in SVOG grants last year, which really provided a lifeline to hundreds of small business. And I have continued to advocate for additional directed relief funds for these kinds of businesses. And as the most recent variant has shown us, we are not quite out of the pandemic yet.

So in conversations with local organizations, nonprofits like the Arts Council of Johnson County, we know that they have been working to support creative partners throughout the community during the pandemic. And most recently I started focusing on small business education and helping artists understand some best practices. You know, business and legal practices.

And so I wanted to ask Ms. Karas, do you think that the artistic community could benefit kind of more broadly from programs like this, business counseling and guidance especially for those small artist-led businesses?

Ms. KARAS. Well, certainly the business owners can benefit from any kind of development that can be offered to them in terms of education, what is available out there for economic development, certain trends that people often do not see when they are running their own business. They might not see the trends that are going on around them.

As to the ripple effect that, of course, it will have, it is on the individuals they hire, the workers. And so everybody will benefit from it to the extent that the education is out there. When government gets involved in looking at very carefully an assisting business, we all benefit. Not just the people who own the businesses but the people who work in them. And as I stated before, the ancillary businesses that benefit from all of the arts economy is sometimes immeasurable. We do not even sometimes stop and think about who might be creating a business around something just because there is an arts employer in the area.

So, yes. The short answer is yes. I think business owners and business developers could benefit from all the education and development that could be available to them.

Ms. DAVIDS. Thank you.

Ms. Garrett, I was hoping to hear from you about, you know, we heard you talk about the kind of ripples and those economic shocks that we see, and particularly as it relates to in-person programming, I am curious about your view of how we can help small busi-

nesses in this sector stay resilient as we think about further pandemic and maybe other types of disruptions.

Ms. GARRETT. So locally, I think it is important to make sure that the federal government keeps infusing resources back into these ecologies and communities. For mine in particular, I think just like every other industry we are going through this sort of great resignation. The more dollars that are lost within these industries that are interconnected, the more likely people are to leave to go to other industries that are more likely to be able to survive. And creative workers in particular are leaving in droves. And so they are leaving restaurants and they are leaving theaters and they are leaving their day job. They are leaving everything so that they can figure out a way to survive. So more infusion of resource would really be helpful. I thank you for the question.

Ms. DAVIDS. Thank you. I see my time has expired.

Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. PHILLIPS. The gentlelady yields back.

And now I recognize the Vice Ranking Member of the Committee, Mr. Williams of Texas for 5 minutes.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you to all of our witnesses. Like all of you, I am a small business owner in Texas. I have been for 51 years. And my father was a great singer in the stages around at the Casa Manana in Fort Worth, Texas. So I grew up seeing a lot of your industry.

When I talk to business owners back in Texas, they are concerned about our supply chains, the out-of-control inflation and the constant threat of tax increases coming from the Democrats in Washington. Each one of these crises poses new challenges for small businesses and adds additional costs for them to keep their lights on. This leaves business owners with tough decisions in order to keep doing what they love. They may have to reduce capital investment. They may have to hold off on hiring new employees or pass the costs if they can along to consumers and raise prices as they are able to keep their doors open.

So Ms. Presley, my question to you is, in your testimony you talked about how your business has struggled with the increase in the cost of goods due to inflation. We all have that problem. Can you discuss the adjustments your business will have to make to offset these cost increases? And furthermore, how do you think tax increases proposed by the Democrats could affect your business?

Ms. PRESLEY. Well, thank you, Congress Williams. And thank you as well for your sponsorship of the Save Our Stages Act.

As I said, we will open again in March, and I think some of the difficult decisions we will make, this is the time of year when we order the sequined jackets and costume and when we make upgrades to our stage. When we look at hiring new performers. Those are all decisions that I believe we will make a bit on a hope and a prayer to be honest. We are very much focused on what is in front of us. Not so much the unknown. We feel like with COVID and all of the issues that you and Congress must have on your plates, we respect that.

One thing that would be helpful I wanted to mention while I had the opportunity is, you know, with the SBA, many of us received grants that helped our businesses. Those grants were a bit late in

coming and we are hoping very much for an extension of time to spend that money. That could make a big difference for many of our venues. And so I wanted to put that before you as well. We are hopeful that COVID will abate. We see that happening in the East but not here yet. And we are very much hoping to be able to operate our businesses as we have done in the past and keep our costs in line so that folks can have a great time.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Okay. I was the Republican lead as many of you said today, and I appreciate that on the Save Our Stages bill that ultimate turned into the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant Program, better known as SVOG. This was a necessary piece of legislation because it helped businesses that were some of the first to close and the last to open as a result of the pandemic. Unfortunately, the SBA took months to get this program up and running and many venues did not survive these delays. And I applaud businesses like yours, Ms. Presley, for being so resilient and able to hold off through this incompetency we saw at the SBA in order to access these funds. Now, throughout this process, I worked extensively with NIVA to communicate the horror stories that we were hearing from the industry as businesses failed to get answers from the SBA regarding the program.

So another question to you, Ms. Presley, can you expand on your experience with the SBA and any issues you faced when attempting to receive the SVOG funds?

Ms. PRESLEY. Well, we had not worked with the SBA in the past. I was thinking about all the things that we have gone through in 56 years. We have been through 9/11 and gas shortages and recessions so this one is a new one. But while our experience with the SBA was good, we did have that delay and that certainly made everyone tense and nervous. I will applaud NIVA and your efforts as well, Congressman, to continue to find ways. This was a new program, something unique, and we recognize that. So the dollars did not flow as fast as we wanted them to. But that said, I think there is a new opportunity to look at now. I know as Ms. Karas talked about, an opportunity for SBA to expand their outreach to business like mine. Many people want to grow their businesses. Entrepreneurs want to start new businesses. We are seldom happy with the status quo and I believe SBA could be a backstop for us. Could provide a lot of information and knowledge that an entrepreneur might not have. So I will say that I look forward to kind of renewed efforts.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Well, easier, not harder would be what we want the SBA to understand.

Lastly, businesses across the country are struggling to find and retain talented workers.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Mr. Williams, your time has expired, sir. I am sorry.

Mr. WILLIAMS. My time expired. I return to you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. PHILLIPS. All right. Thank you, sir.

And with that I recognize the gentlelady from Illinois, Ms. Newman, for 5 minutes.

Ms. NEWMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you, Ranking Member, for putting together this great testimony today. So let me

start by thanking all of the witnesses on this call today. You have brought light and love to when we desperately needed it throughout our nation. I am a firm believer that the arts not only heal and help us get through hard times but also unite those that typically are not united. So thank you for your great work.

I will also say a couple of other things. Having been an assistant producer and a copyrighter in my early career, I have very genuine feelings on this topic because those were hard times when I had no health care. I went without jobs for long periods of time. And it was just a constant struggle. So I clearly have the lived experience around it but also, you are living it right now in a much more challenging environment. So I that much more applaud your amazing work. I am also a former small business owner. So kind of a 360 on this topic. So I feel for everyone.

I have a forward-looking set of questions. And I am going to go to Ms. Karas first. So being a Member of the Women Labor Caucus and being a product of unions and being a strong advocate for unions, there are just some very creative things that unions have done over time to support their workers in these times. We may have this issue again. I do not think we can deny that now.

So Ms. Karas, what do you think we can do to support our unions to help our artists and creative community to be stronger? Are there some ideas you have in a forward-looking way that would help us anticipate further bad times at some point?

Ms. KARAS. Thank you. I appreciate this question. I have been in unions for a long, long many years and every time I think about what unions do for the workers it all comes down to providing the security of a group that supports itself and supports one another. You know, we call each other sisters and brothers in our organizations and there is a kind of a family feeling. We depend on one another. My colleague, Mr. Elrod and I are in the same unions and he knows he can depend on me and I know I can depend on him when the going gets rough. That is what solidarity is all about. So that is part of what unions provide for people. But moreover, the job security while they are working to know that they are going to be taken care of, and employers, you know, it is no accident the biggest entertainment employers in this country and maybe in the world hire multiple numbers of unions to do every project they have. Why is that? Because they know what they are getting. And that is another kind of security that we all look at. We want to make sure that when we show up on the job we are going to be treated decently, we get good pension, health, and other job securities. And we also know that our employers appreciate that we are ready to show up and provide professional work in a disciplined manner. And looking forward, I think that some of the government, the COVID pandemic relief that our union received along with hundreds of thousands of other businesses was a lifeline to keep the doors open, to keep the lights on, and some semblance of staff even if you could not keep everyone to provide securities for the industry. We provided assistance to Members who could not pay rent, utilities, medical expenses, by donating to the Actors Fund, which is a charity, a national charity.

Union workplaces also know that they provide better conditions for women and people of color than nonunion employers do. And

the wages are higher, the benefits are better. And so when workers are looking for work, many of them want to go to unions because they know that they will have that security. And we are seeing that kind of interest arise among young people today throughout the country because they know if they ban together and tell their employer what they need, they are stronger together. So off the top of my head those are just some of the remarkable benefits of a union. And going forward, I think the stronger the union movement is, the more the workers will be there for the American economy.

Ms. NEWMAN. Well, thank you for your comments. And yes, well heard. I, obviously, as some of the folks mentioned, am a strong proponent of the PATPA—because when we have stronger unions, we have a stronger middle class. So thank you. If I may——

Ms. CHU. [Presiding] The gentlelady's time has expired.

Ms. NEWMAN. Okay. Thank you. I yield back. Thank you.

Ms. CHU. And now, Mr. Fitzgerald, the gentleman from Wisconsin, is now recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZGERALD. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Karas, there has been some interest from some arts and culture organizations including in my home state of Wisconsin of temporarily removing the $300 cap on charitable giving deductions to allow more money to kind of flow into the nonprofit creative sector which seems like obviously an easy thing to do and a good thing to do. But you are here not only representing the Actors' Equity Association but also their foundation. Have you guys looked at this and do you know what the impact might be? This would be, I guess, considered support for the Performing Arts Tax Parity Act.

Ms. KARAS. Yes, thank you very much, Congressman. You know, of course we have looked at all the tax changes that have come about in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and the recent adjustments that have been made to the code and the above-the-line deduction for charitable contributions has certainly been a boon to the charities who many of which thought that they, and did actually, lose contributions because of the less use of the itemized deduction schedule. The reduced use I should say. So yes, I think any contributions to nonprofits are always going to be welcomed. Is it going to have a huge effect on someone's tax liability? Possibly not at the rate of 300. But if it was unlimited you would see the nonprofit world be much more supported by the contributors because they would have an incentive to do it now if they are not using the itemized deduction schedule. So it is a definite yes. We certainly approve of it. And while it does not have a direct effect on the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act, that, too, will support businesses and employers as workers are able to stay in the industry, feel confident in the industry because they have equalized their incomes with other taxpayers who earn the same amount of money.

Mr. FITZGERALD. Very good. Thank you for that answer.

Let me turn to Ms. Garrett. Ms. Garrett, kind of a trickier question, something that obviously many entities are dealing with but I know the Oregon Shakespeare Festival announced that proof of full vaccination or a negative COVID test will be required to attend performances in 2022. We are kind of already seeing the effects of

this requirement. But how much of an impact do you believe this will have on ticket and concession sales and particularly I guess as we get closer to spring and into the summer months?

Ms. GARRETT. So thank you very much for the question. OSF has had for years had a very loyal patron base that comes back year over year, over year, over year. And they love the company. They love the artists that work here and would do anything to make sure that those artists are saved. So what we have experienced in these last few months of producing plays is a real robust participation in making sure that you are vaccinated and you have your card and that you have your proof of the test and, you know, that your child has a proof of the test and everybody is willing to go in in masks. We were kind of surprised at how compliant our patron base is. And again, that is because we have families. We have legacy families that have been coming here for 30 years, 40 years. Grandparents bringing grandchildren. And so there is a real desire to make sure that everybody is safe. So it will not affect our bottom line I do not believe because of the desire for people to be safe. And we have had patrons say as they are standing in line with their cards and everything, you know, thank you for doing it this way. We want to be able to be safe, too, as we walk into these spaces.

Mr. FITZGERALD. Yeah, I think the sands are shifting quickly on those issues and I think we will see how that plays out.

Thank you for being here today, and I yield back, Madam Chair.

Ms. CHU. The gentleman yields back.

And now Ms. Bourdeaux from Georgia, is now recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BOURDEAUX. Thank you so much, Madam Chairwoman.

The creative economy is a very vital part of our nation's economy and enriches our communities through all sorts of cultural contributions. I know after being deprived during COVID for a while, just sitting and hearing people sing in person just was such a wonderful, spiritual lifting up. So I personally experienced how great it is to get back to the arts.

In my district, arts-related businesses employ an estimated 10,000 people and venues in Georgia's 7th District received some of the much-needed relief in the form of over $2 million through the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant Program. But clearly more work needs to be done.

The SVOG provided this important boost, but one of the things we are starting to think about more now is what are we going to do if we keep getting hit by these COVID variants over and over, and over again going forward? And how do we need to be thinking about how we support the arts industry? How do we support industries like this over time if that is going to be the scenario?

So I guess starting with Mr. Elrod, maybe if you could talk a little about this and what is going on in the industry as they are thinking about this. Obviously, theater is about being in person and that is challenging. What do you think the creative industry is going to need both to recover from the pandemic but also to really prepare for the long-term if this does, in fact, become something where we are going to have to deal with it for another couple years?

Mr. ELROD. Well, thank you very much for the question. I think one of the things that is interesting is that with COVID-19, especially with Omicron, we are in a situation where we have been hit by a tsunami. The tidal wave is in and it has not gone out. So we do not actually know the negative impact on the entire creative economy right now. And one of the closest things we had is that Brookings Institution's report from last summer, Lost art: Measuring COVID-19's devastating impact on the creative economy, which measured losses just between April and June of 2020. And we were talking about $150 billion in lost sales and 2.7 million unemployed arts workers. So if you extrapolate that out and just keep multiplying over and over and over again, you really do think about it in terms of that star analogy that I used in my opening speech. We are in a situation where there are possibly, probably many black holes all over the country with lost art, lost institutions, closed venues, and arts workers themselves. Ms. Garrett talked about the workforce leaving and doing other things. And when you think about who we are, what we do, and what we provide, you want these 5.2 million workers doing what we do. You want all 673,000 businesses to survive this because they do anchor local dynamic economies. So what there is to do about it is absolutely all the interventions that everybody else has been talking about. But what I was proposing in my opening testimony is a kind of creative economy super package. If you take every piece of arts investment legislation that has been introduced in the last couple of years, put them together, really make sure there is robust unemployment, you can put together basically a floor underneath the entire industry, especially our arts workers and get us to launch into this next phase. But because there is so much unknown and the wave is still in, that is why I was recommending maybe a GAO report or a congressional commission because I think with a $919 billion industry that has suffered this much damage and continues to suffer this much damage, we have to take a really deep granular look at what is happening, what has happened, and what needs to happen for us to come back.

Ms. BOURDEAUX. Thank you. I am going to run out of time but I want to just wrap up with this idea. So, for instance, we have introduced legislation. It is called the Fresh Air Act for Business, which is to improve ventilation in businesses. And the idea is we need to restructure for the long haul as opposed to just give short shots of funding in order to just make it through the crisis. And so I just want to encourage everybody to start thinking about this. We do not know for sure that that is what is going to end up happening but I think we need to start planning for that and start thinking about what is the congressional response if, in fact, this is going to be something that we need to plan for the long haul.

Thank you so much. I yield back.

Ms. CHU. The gentlelady yields back.

And now the gentlelady from Texas, Ms. Van Duyne, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Thank you very much, Chairwoman and Ranking Member Luetkemeyer for holding this hearing.

Early in the pandemic, the effect on the creative economy was apparent. Shows were halted, venues were shuttered due to un-

clear CDC guidance. State and local restrictions were constantly shifting, making it very hard for small businesses to reopen and stay open. After a long wait, consumers in many states, such as Texas where I represent, are now returning to their pre-pandemic lives. There is no doubt that one of the keys to a thriving creative economy is an open society. States and localities across the country should follow Texas's model.

Unfortunately, those eager to return are now faced with new economic challenges. Everywhere you turn, from the gas pump to the grocery store, prices are rising the fastest in 4 decades, and that is if you can even avoid empty shelves.

The Democrats' response continues to be throwing more money at the problem but at what point do we ask what we are getting for that money? We spent taxpayer dollars paying people to stay home from work for much of the pandemic, but it is still hurting employers. And just last week we had the SBA's OIG unable to tell us what happens to the billions of dollars of fraudulent money that is clawed back from SBA's COVID relief programs, money that could be highly beneficial to the very businesses that we are discussing today.

The creative sector is part of the small business economy and all small businesses are in desperate need of solutions to inflation, supply chain struggles, and employment shortages. What we do not need is another frivolous, multi-trillion dollar spending package while we are chasing down at least $100 billion in fraud. The fact is, billions of federal dollars remain unspent and state governments have so much access to stimulus money that they are now paying off deficits that were created by their failure to keep a balanced budget instead of going toward the pandemic.

I am interested, Mr. Elrod, your business is in New York City. During the pandemic, state and local governments diverted in how they handled restrictions in their respective communities. In each of your communities, well, specifically in New York, how did your state and local restrictions and regulations affect your business and ability to operate?

Mr. ELROD. Well, in New York City, I was sitting with a friend of mine. I was on my way to see a Broadway show on March 11th when we were sitting in a midtown bar and our governor came on and announced that Broadway was closing. And not far after that, off-Broadway. And then pretty much the curtain came down and the lights went out all across New York City. And a lot of people in retrospect feel that March 11th was too late and that the response was too slow and that the virus had already taken hold in New York City, obviously, a very dense metropolitan area. As an L train rider, I can tell you we were all in a lot of danger. And so I believe that what happened was appropriate and prophylactic against——

Ms. VAN DUYNE. So then you are agreeing that shutting down was the appropriate response. And I also need to ask, did you understand that New York City, or New York has received over $272 billion in COVID relief? I am wondering how much of that $272 billion has been received by the State of New York. Do you feel like that was appropriately spent on the arts?

Mr. ELROD. Well, part of the efforts I was with earlier in the year, as Be An #Arts Hero we were deciding do we go to the state and see if we can get American Rescue Plan funds or do we continue talking to the federal government? And the answer has to be both. Because what we are really doing here with Be An #Arts Hero is we are calling it CELP, the Creative Economy Literacy Project. And what we are trying to do is talk to people like you in state and local government and say, hey, we are in a profound amount of trouble. And if you really want to build back in an incredible way, we are the way to do it. But you need to stabilize us, put a floor underneath us, and then you can harness us as a backbone of a great recovery. So in my opinion, there is never going to be enough money spent on the creative economy until everybody understands just what a phenomenon we are and what an incredible resource is available to policymakers if they would like to take advantage of us. And that is why I have proposed this kind of super package to stabilize us and allow us to, you know, help us to help you build back on the other side of this. After the plague came the Renaissance. After the 1918 Flu came the Roaring Twenties. There is going to be a huge appetite for what we have to offer so we need to be around to offer it and we will jumpstart this.

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Thank you. My time is done. I yield back. Thank you.

Mr. ELROD. Thank you.

Ms. CHU. The gentlelady's time has expired.

And now I recognize myself for 5 minutes.

First, I want to thank Chairwoman Velázquez for calling this important hearing which I was truly looking forward to as a representative of the Los Angeles area, which is the center of film, television, and music. It is hard to overstate the impact that the pandemic has had on the creative economy. To support a strong, durable recovery for those industries that employ over 5 million workers nationwide, we need to ensure that creative professionals are fairly compensated for their work. And that includes musical artists, like Members of the Recording Academy who must be fairly compensated, as well as our actors of film and television.

That is why I am proud to have founded and relaunched the bipartisan Creative Rights Caucus with my Co-Chair, Representative Drew Ferguson of Georgia. This caucus will continue to work to protect the rights of content creators and I look forward to working with you to further this goal.

I also ask for unanimous consent submit for the record testimony from the Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of TV and Radio Arts (SAG-AFTRA), which represents 160,000 hardworking professionals in the entertainment industry. And as Chair I say, so ordered.

So now for my question. Ms. Karas and Mr. Elrod, I am proud to have introduced H.R. 4750, the Performing Artists Tax Parity Act of 2021. This legislation would modernize the qualified performing artist tax deduction to ensure that more creative workers can seek employment without facing steep personal expenses.

Now, I am proud to have pushed for relief for performers. For instance, for the Gig Worker Pandemic Unemployment benefit and

for the Mixed Income Unemployment subsidy which were successfully included in our legislation to relieve us on the pandemic. And I am also proud that this Committee supported theaters and venues through the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant.

But we must do so much more to support the actors, musicians, and artists who make performances so incredibly special. The Qualified Performing Artist tax deduction has not been updated in decades and currently does not meet the needs of performers.

So Ms. Karas, can you talk more about the purpose of this tax deduction and why we need legislation to modernize it for today's economy?

And Mr. Elrod, I have heard from so many performers who have to pay for extra expenses, like photo and makeup and still not get the job necessarily. Can you tell us your stories about the expenses that performers have to face?

Ms. Karas?

Ms. KARAS. Thank you very much, Congresswoman Chu. You know, we also thank you for your introduction of this bill, H.R. 4750 and the support that we have gotten so far.

PATPA is a correction to an unintended consequences of what happens when a bill is created by a president, in this case Ronald Reagan, recognizing the value of entertainment workers in the code and the provision itself was not indexed for inflation. Congress saw fit to leave it in the code with the last Tax Cuts and Jobs Act tax bill and we were grateful for that but we realized that the modernization is long overdue. What this bill dies is it levels the playing field by equalizing the income that people who work in the performing arts have against people who do not work in the performing arts.

I will just give you a little example. You and I are both single and I am in the performing arts and you work in an office. And we both earn $80,000. But I am spending about 25 percent of my gross income to pay my agent, my manager, to look for work, transportation, continuing education and classes, some equipment, and especially during the pandemic, we have all had to buy——

Ms. CHU. Ms. Karas, I would like to give time for Mr. Elrod also to say something.

Mr. ELROD. Thank you very much. I would simply join Ms. Karas in everything that she was saying. And just on a personal anecdotal note, of course the challenges of the pandemic have increased personal costs even while we suffered 15 months and more of total unemployment, we are expected to have the highest quality Internet, the highest quality computers and cameras and microphones. And for the little work that we are able to do during this time, we are still paying 10 percent agent commissions. So there are lots and lots of out-of-pocket expenses that performing artists have to take on. And they have actually increased during one of the hardest moments for us. And so something like the passage of the bill that you have introduced would help us out a lot. And thank you for introducing it.

Ms. CHU. Thank you so much. My time has expired.

And now the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Meuser is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEUSER. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I thank our Ranking Member very much, Mr. Luetkemeyer, for bringing us all together. Very interesting subject. Thank you for all being here.

So I want to just talk a little bit initially about the general business concerns that your industry has and you as proprietors and entrepreneurs and stakeholders. You know, obviously education to create your best workers, your staff, your talent, education these days is unbelievably high, very expensive both public and private. So skills development must be a challenge. Taxes, certain in New York and other cities are crazy. And the idea of increased tax on small businesses does not in my view help at all. Keeping your employees happy, healthy, but as well, safe. You know, because I want to ask about that a little bit, how public safety weighs in here. Access to capital, very important. Your cash flow. You have all been talking about that. Technology I made a note of but that is something a little bit different. Capital investment was mentioned about the ventilators just came up briefly. What sort of additional capital investments were made to handle COVID and just matters moving forward. I think people are just generally more health conscious. And your product, of course, creating that. And your customers.

Now, I understand, see, you folks were shut down, or Broadway. I am relating this somewhat to Broadway. I cannot speak for Branson. Shut down for about 18 months, I believe. Now, Japan was shut down for 6 months, UK was shut down for 12, and yet even with that build up, you are getting about 66 percent of capacity now. And Japan was very big on the whole ventilator plan. UK to an extent. They were trying to catch up afterwards. I am not so sure what was being done on Broadway and Branson and L.A. and other places.

But the thing is this, look, probably everybody on here has seen The Phantom, seen Hamilton, seen Wicket and Jersey Boys and love the theater. So we are very much advocates and proponents of doing what it takes to help bring this extremely important industry back. I mean, I have a daughter that lives in Manhattan and all that is very important.

So the thing is, I want to ask, what would you like to see? Besides additional PPP or even if that is necessary, or the Shuttered Venue program, what would you do differently? I mean, Monday morning quarterback is easy. What would you do? What is your plan moving forward? Where can we be of assistance? Because it is also notable that, for instance, the NHL, indoor, larger arena, understand, but they have had a record year. And yet, our entertainment industry is struggling big time.

So I will ask Ms. Presley. I know you are Branson, and Mr. Elrod, I would like to ask you, what have we learned and what should we do moving forward that will be favorable to you all and to your business?

Ms. PRESLEY. Well, thank you, Congressman. I appreciate the question. It is a difficult choice. There is no way around that. I think consumer confidence is really where we are focused as an association with NIVA. As we have talked about, my business is here. We are looking out for our guests and our customers and our employees. We are encouraging masks and we are encouraging vaccination but that is where we are here in Missouri. For other

venues across the nation there are multiple, multiple, rather different views of this. And of course, going forward with COVID it is very hard to know.

Mr. MEUSER. And Ms. Presley, I am sorry. I probably had too long of an opening.

Mr. Elrod, could you speak upon New York?

Mr. ELROD. Thank you very much. I think the short answer is would it not be great to have a secretary of Arts and Culture? You know, when we have agriculture and it is in trouble, there is a secretary of Agriculture to say, "Okay, this is what needs to be done. Let's take a deep dive analysis." If we had a secretary of the Creative Economy or Arts and Culture, somebody at the executive level on the Domestic Policy Council who could say, "All right, look at this $919 billion industry and this 5.2 million person workforce, look at the jeopardy they are in. Let's develop together the guidance of what to do." Right off the top of my head, obviously continuing robust unemployment for the nation's arts workers would be fantastic.

Mr. MEUSER. Thank you, Mr. Elrod.

I am running out of time. I will make that recommendation to our governor of Pennsylvania. And I do believe in the Film Tax Credit and your industry. So thank you very much.

I am sorry, Madam Chair. I yield back.

Ms. CHU. The gentleman's time has expired.

And now the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Kim, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KIM. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to start, Madam Chair, by just asking unanimous consent to enter a letter from Our Pride New Jersey into the record.

Ms. CHU. So ordered.

Mr. KIM. Thank you.

Our Pride New Jersey is based in Burlington. It is in my district. And pre-COVID, there were over 19,000 arts-related businesses in New Jersey that employed more than 80,000 people. In our state, every art and cultural patron spends over $33 in local economies each time they purchase a ticket for a cultural event. And that translates into over $662 million each year in economic impact when cultural venues are fully in operation. So the creative sector clearly is having a real impact in terms of creating jobs and economic activity.

But I also want to focus on another element here, which is that it has an impact on our kids. And they have been through an awful lot over the last couple years.

Back in April I met with the Burlington County Regional Chamber of Commerce. And they connected me with an organization called Morristown Theater Company in my district. As a nonprofit arts organization without their own building, they were not sure if they were eligible for the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant. They had to get extra creative during the pandemic, even producing shows out of a parking lot. My office was able to work with them to confirm that they were eligible and encourage them to apply. They ended up getting a $200,000 grant. They also utilized the EIDL, the PPP, employee retention credits, and assistance form the

New Jersey Economic Development Authority. They report that this grant, along with others, allowed them to keep their doors open and to keep their work going forward.

Just yesterday, I checked in and they were starting rehearsal for an upcoming production of The Little Mermaid which they are working on with a lot of little kids in the community. And the kids are incredibly excited that we are doing this hearing today and shining a light on the arts and about how it impacts them.

I want these kids and kids all over the country to know that we are listening to them. That we understand that this is not just about business. It is about our development and it is about our education to our kids as well.

So I just wanted to throw this out there. You know, Ms. Garrett, I know your organization works with professional artists. But if you are any of the other witnesses would like to speak to the importance of the arts for our children, what they have missed during this pandemic, and the benefit of investing in the arts, experiencing the arts education for our children and our families, and what it is that we could try to do to just try to make up for this lost time in terms of being able to give your kids that opportunity to experience arts but also to be able to participate in it.

So I just kind of wanted to open it up if anyone wanted.

Ms. Garrett, if you wanted to start off.

Ms. GARRETT. I thank you for the question. You know, numerous studies have shown repeatedly that arts education increases student engagement, helps them learn positive habits and attitudes and creativity and creative problem solving and teaches critical intellectual skills and observation and helps them learn languages and mathematics and helps them practice teamwork and all of that. OSF has been a leader in arts education for more than 50 years. And like I said during my opening statement, you know, we have 2,300 education and engagement programs that were completely shut down but served communities across the region. We have students that come in from all over the West Coast to watch our plays, to learn something from our artists, to engage in activities around creative art making. And the loss of that is twofold. The first is that you lose access to all of those wonderful things that we all get, we all benefit form when we learn in arts education programs.

But you also lose that pipeline. I started in arts education programming. Most of us who are arts workers did. We started there. We learned about a craft and we continued to focus on it until we mastered it. And so without introducing children, you do not have enough people on the other end who are really interested and engaged.

And here is the thing. Most of us in the arts creative economy, we have transmittable skills. Carpenters can work in construction. I run a multi-million dollar, multi-lateral business. I can be a CL of a different kind of company. You know, you have to sort of thing about it like that, that we give our skill set to this industry so that everybody can benefit from it.

Mr. KIM. I think what you raise there about the pipeline. What you raise there about the pipeline is great. And the last thing I will just say and I will close is that, you know, I also felt like with my

own kids, I have a 4-year-old and a 6-year-old, that getting them to engage back in arts has been a way to socialize them back into society after, you know, specially half my 4-year-old's life has been in a pandemic. And getting him to go and sing and dance and other things like that has been so rewarding.

So thank you for what you do. And Madam Chair, I turn it back to you.

Ms. CHU. The gentleman's time has expired.

And now the gentlelady from California, Ms. Young Kim, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. YOUNG KIM. Thank you, Chairwoman, and Ranking Member Luetkemeyer, for holding this hearing.

I want to thank all our panelists for your time and engaging in our conversation with us.

First, Ms. Presley, in your testimony you indicated that your business is struggling with the increased cost of goods because of inflation. So can you look at your list of expenses and tell me which are the biggest price increases that you have noticed in the last 6 months. And as you know, I say this because these price increases, the inflation, it is expected to persist until well into the middle of next year. So I wanted to hear your thoughts and elaborate how this is going to affect your business and your planning.

Ms. PRESLEY. Thank you, Congresswoman, first.

I wish I could say that I exactly know. We are dark right now and we will open again in March. But I certainly see increases coming and shortages as well of the type of merchandise that we sell. I see that in terms of our concession supplies. We saw that last fall. Not only just price increases but we saw inability to secure cups and different things that we need for our business. We know that is real. It is unknown yet in terms of insurance costs but we anticipate that that may happen as well. It is not any one thing I would say. It is just cumulative and when you run a small business like our independent venues do, it is the cumulative things that actually are most difficult to manage.

Ms. YOUNG KIM. Sure. Well, thanks for your answer. I asked that because if the businesses have to plan and deal with inflation well into next year and beyond, it is clear that the problem is not transitory and we have to deal with it; right? So I just wanted to ask that.

But I also want to ask a question to you, Ms. Presley. I was intrigued by the statistic that you quote that for every dollar spent at a small music venue, $12 of economic activity was generated for area businesses. Can you elaborate on that study and share with us your unique experience with the local economic ripple effect of Presley's Theater in Bronson?

Ms. PRESLEY. Well, thank you. Yes, I mean, I suspect if you think back about the last time you took a vacation, you very seldom go to do one thing and then leave. So we are cognizant that when our visitors come to Branson, it is usually a visitor party of about 3-1/2 people and they spend over $1,100 inside our community to do things. They buy gas. They eat at the local restaurant. They for certain go shopping. They are likely to see more things. People tend to see over three shows when they come to Branson, Missouri. So I see this with all of our independent venues and

small businesses, whether you be rural or urban. You go downtown Chicago, you are going to see something fun at a music venue but you are going to stop before and after. Maybe you are going to have a drink. You took an uber to get to your destination. I think that it is easy to see how we are able to multiply the $1 into economic numbers that enhance our entire community. Keeps people employed.

Ms. YOUNG KIM. Thank you for your answer. You know, like Ms. Judy Chu, I represent the State of California where we have Hollywood and movies and entertainment is really the key, one of the key industries in our state and we welcome everybody and we can really expand on that dollar spent and generate that economic activity that we talked about in Missouri.

The next question I would like to ask is to Ms. Garrett. An ongoing theme that we have explored in this Committee is the supply chain crisis. Businesses, especially the small businesses, are unable to source goods necessary to create their products or deliver goods to anxious customers because of the supply chain crisis. And I realize that your businesses, live entertainment is not a good space business. But have you seen any impact in this regard in the live entertainment realm?

Ms. GARRETT. Oh, yes. Thank you very much for the question.

So because of the surge and consumer demand and COVID warehouse closures, we had a whole myriad issues trying to open up our shows last year and we know we are going to move into the same problems this year. Cardboard, lumber, containers, trucks, workers, paint. We canceled early performances because of supply chain issues for our winter show. And people went on stage with paint still being wet. The lumber did not arrive in time. It was still sitting out on the water. The molding company had a COVID issue so they were not able to get things through the supply chain. And this is going to be ongoing. And after nearly 2 years of expenses with no audience revenues, the performing arts will find themselves facing outsized restart costs.

Ms. CHU. The gentlelady's time has expired.

And now the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Evans, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EVANS. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Karas, I hope I get your name right, you submitted testimony to the House Ways and Means Committee regarding your views on the Qualified Performance Arts Tax deduction, a portion of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Would you mind elaborating on the effect that this tax increase has had on working middle-class artists?

Ms. KARAS. I appreciate your question, Mr. Congressman.

The very short answer is it has been discouraging. A lot of our performing arts colleagues have decided to leave the business because they can no longer sustain the out-of-pocket costs to remain viable. So they have taken other jobs. They have gone into other work. And it has been unfortunate that they have had to leave the industry. Those who have stayed have struggled because as I was saying before, to have to spend your out-of-pocket money, a write-off of your gross income and then be taxed equally the way someone else with the same wages you have is you are starting behind

already. So, for example, if I spend 25 percent of my gross income on my out-of-pocket show business expenses just to stay viable and another taxpayer with the same wages does not have it, we are taxed the same but I have fewer dollars to spend on my home, my rent, my utilities, my medical care. If I have a family, on any of those costs. It is very discouraging. So we are hoping that the Performing Artists Tax Parity Act will get passed with all due speed to put us on a level playing field with taxpayers who have the same income but do not have to spend the same amount of money to stay in their jobs. This is vital.

And you know, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act really stressed tax relief for working middle-class taxpayers. So this is all we are asking is to be on a level playing field, to pay our fair share of tax, no more, but certainly no less.

Mr. EVANS. I would like to ask you a follow-up question. One of our largest exports is entertainment. Can you talk about how important it is, both for America and for the rest of the world, that we support the creative economy for this reason?

Ms. KARAS. Thank you. Yes. It is rather astounding, the export of entertainment around the world. Those of us who are in the United States take it for granted that we can just have all of this content at our fingertips. A lot of it is recorded. Much of it is live. Some of the live has been streamed over the pandemic. But when you think of the amount, the billions and billions of dollars that is sold internationally, it is astounding. Code Section 181 to help the employers, the production costs, the tax subsidies, you know, we would hope that the cap would be raised on that at some point to help those employers because the more help they have, the more production they generate.

Well, as I said before, 4.3 percent of the GDP is the entertainment sector. That is astounding. Most people do not even think about it because it is ephemeral. There is no durable goods there. So we are thankful for the support and we hope for all of it from this Committee as well for the PATPA so that we can enjoy the same level of spending if our tax burdens are equalized with those who do not have the burdens that we do.

Mr. EVANS. Very quickly I would like to follow up with Mr. Elrod on that same question and his response to it.

Mr. Elrod on that question?

Mr. ELROD. I think what is important is obviously there is the socioeconomic or the economic impact of the export but there is also the identity of America and the idea of American soft power throughout the world. As people consume our content, our movies, as they visit our cities, 68 percent of all tourism is for arts and cultural activities. When people come here from around the world and they take part in our creative economy, it gives them a sense of pride and wonder and awe about the power and strength of America inside their collective imaginations. And then they take that back throughout the world.

Ms. CHU. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. EVANS. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. CHU. Thank you.

And now I recognize the gentlelady from New York, Ms. Tenney, for 5 minutes.

Ms. TENNEY. Thank you, Madam Chair, and Ranking Member Luetkemeyer. And thanks for holding this hearing. And we appreciate the insight and time of the witnesses as well. And I am honored to represent Upstate New York, which has a strong history and culture relating to the arts. I also always wanted to be an artist, but here I am, a politician now. We need a very strong ecosystem of manufacturers, designers, venues that serve artists and musicians in our greater community, including many historic sites. A lot of people do not realize that my hometown of Utica is where Dick Clark went to school and got his start. Annette Funicello of Mouseketeer fame. Joe Bonamassa, the great musician, Sawyer Fredericks, and so many others have come from our small city, our region, who have done an amazing job.

But another thing is on the manufacturing sector, a lot of people do not realize that the golden artist colors you see when anyone who is an artist knows what they are, were actually started in my district in New Berlin—we say New Berlin, not New Berlin—New York. And I have provided a wide arrange of oil, acrylic, watercolor paints for earnest for many years. We also have a lot of printing companies, including my own, but another one I would like to mention is Curcio Printing in Vestal, New York, where there is a lot of graphic design. And people do not realize I owned a newspaper, but there is a lot of artistic venues with newspapers, designing ads designing creative production items for customers. And we did a lot of that.

My concern is that in so much of this, and what has happened in my community with these great venues and great artists, is during the pandemic these industries have suffered. If they had not been designated essential, they were forced to shut down, forced to lose. And thankfully for the PPP program we were able to get some back. But a lot of these lockdowns are continuing. And even in an unscientific way which is really put I think a real problem with especially a lot of our event spaces which we have many people who come to perform in our region. And it concerns me that if we continue with these lockdowns, we are not going to get the reopening and the need for even performing artists, musicians, and others to be able to get back on stage and we will have to rely on remote learning. And as we know, there is nothing like being there in person.

So I first wanted to ask Mr. Elrod, since you were very passionate about this, I had heard from a lot of these event space owners about the shutdowns or inability to have consistency and what the rules are and how to enforce those and guidance as how to deal with this.

From your experience in theater and performance space, do you think that this sort of continuation of this arbitrary decision-making and, you know, this process is helping the creative economy. How would you make a uninformed standard so that everywhere that our artists perform, whether they are in my community or in New York, they know what is predictable and how to invest so they do not waste money on resources. I am trying to protect themselves and their audiences.

Mr. ELROD. That is a really good question. And thanks for all that prelude. My first professional job was at the Hangar Theater

in Ithaca, New York, so I am familiar with upstate and it is close and dear to me.

You know, just anecdotally from my point of view and my experience is at the beginning the shutdowns were intended to keep people safe from the transmission of COVID-19 and those government lockdowns did lead to this 15 to 18 month in forced unemployment for so many arts workers. And again, when we talk about FPUC, et cetera, it was not that arts workers were lazy and did not want to go to work. We could not. So those were the first rounds of shutdowns.

Now, the shutdowns that I am experiencing, or at least the ones that I am seeing now, are not necessarily happening because of arbitrary government imposition but because the workforce are getting sick. So like in my neighborhood of Bushwick, Brooklyn, I follow everybody on Instagram and I was going to go see a rock and roll concert on New Year's Eve. Well, most of the staff of the venue got sick. They shut the venue down. And there are a lot of really cool rock and roll clubs, et cetera, that I would love to see. And they are all just closed because——

Ms. TENNEY. Okay. Can I reclaim my time? I just want to say it is great, okay, so your position is the shutdowns.

I want to just ask Ms. Presley if you could weigh in on that. You know, on inflation or the supply chain. Representative Kim got into that a little bit with you. Can you just kind of elaborate? Is it just people are sick or is it inflation and supply chain that is affecting your industry? You have got 10 seconds.

Ms. PRESLEY. I have to say it is both. We certainly have seen increased illness here this last month but we are hopeful in the next month that we will see some of that wane. But consumer confidence is still the driver and whether or not our visitors feel safe both from the virus and to travel.

Ms. TENNEY. Thank you.

Ms. CHU. The gentlelady's time has expired.

And now the gentlelady form Pennsylvania, Ms. Houlahan, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Hi, thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you so much for the panelists and their testimony today. This topic is very, very personal to me because my daughter is, indeed, a director of theater. A professional director of theater. In fact, she worked out at OSF when Bill Roush was there and Jacob Padron is one of her mentors. And so hello out there to OSF.

The creative economy plays a really large role in my community, too, with 296 small businesses involved in the arts, entertainment, recreation within Pennsylvania's 6th Congressional District, which is just outside of Philadelphia. And many people have mentioned the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program having been a lifeline during this time. With that said, especially with Omicron, I know that many business workers in the creative economy are still especially vulnerable during this public health crisis.

As Congress is trying to understand the needs for additional COVID relief, I think we need to be smart about improving these programs and learning from the challenges that we have experienced in the programs we have rolled out.

With that said, I have heard from employers in my community, like Science Explorers, which is an organization in my district which has applied for the Paycheck Protection Program grant and the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant. The business reached out to my office to express their frustration because the SVOG process was very complex and they found it to be very time consuming and burdensome.

So my first question is to Ms. Nataki Garrett. I understand that similar to Science Explorers at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival also applied for both PPP and SVOG grants. Can you please describe your experiences with the Paycheck Protection Program application compared to the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program. Particularly, I am wondering if there are ways where we could be improving the SVOG program to be streamlined and approved.

Ms. GARRETT. Thank you for the question. Just to be honest with you, I think the biggest problem was that there was not enough information. And so our banks did not have enough information and so they could not pass on enough information to us. And then the other thing was the information from the SBA kept shifting. And so we thought we would have something under control and then we were given something else. And then we had to submit this paper and get this thing done.

We had a little bit of leeway because we had received some CARES Act funding as well through the state. And so we had a little bit of a buffer but a lot of my colleagues really suffered in that time waiting for information to be clarified. It was different from state to state and it was different actually from bank to bank. And so I think streamlining the process would be really beneficial. And especially if Congress were to be willing to release the $2 billion additional funds that are left over from the SVOG back into circulation to streamline a process so that we could have access to that money, now that we have already gone through a process it would be really, really helpful.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Thank you. And my next question is sort of a follow-on to that to Mr. Carson Elrod. You had mentioned in your testimony that the SVOG grants are a lifeline and that live entertainment venue sector is a small fraction of the large and fragile creative economy at large. And so I have heard similar sentiments from businesses like my own, Science Explorers, which was ultimately deemed ineligible for SVOG relief despite having had to cancel 500 programs of their own at the start of the pandemic. How can the SVOG program, assuming that we are able to shake loose some more resources, increase or enhance the eligibility requirements to be able to be improving so that more businesses like that business that I am mentioning could be able to receive the relief that they need in these challenging times. Is there a way to expand the definition or what would you recommend?

Mr. ELROD. I recommend doing exactly that. And thank you so much for the question.

One of the earliest collaborators we had at Be An #Arts Hero was Brian Blythe. And he works in John Kristiansen's costume shop in Manhattan. And he started the Costume Industry Coalition, which represents over 60 highly skilled, artisanal workers,

and their whole job is to supply costumes to the entire ecosystem of the creative economy. That is cruise lines, operas, rock and roll shows, theater. I mean, they are a cornerstone of the creative economy nationally. And they had to close down completely at the beginning of everything. All of their orders dried up. After the short rounds of PPP, they had to lay everybody off. And they have been essentially doing, you know, kind of Go Fund Me and charities. And they were one of the industries that fell through the cracks because the SVOG grants did not really contemplate the entirety of the creative economy. And it is really important that everybody know that that intervention is a watershed moment in American history between Congress and the creative economy. And there is nobody in the creative economy that is not appreciative of what #Save Our Stages and SVOG represents. What would be amazing is to superfund it, expand it, and make sure that it really is a floor for the entirety of the creative economy to get us through this moment and into the next one.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Thank you. I appreciate it.

My time has run out and I yield back, Madam Chair.

Ms. CHU. The gentlelady's time has expired.

And now the gentleman from New York, Mr. Garbarino, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARBARINO. Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the opportunity to speak, and thank you to the Ranking Member for having this hearing today.

Mr. Elrod, my question was similar to what Ms. Houlahan just asked. By the way, loved you in Wedding Crashers.

I was going to ask you about the other business. I am from Long Island, New York. You know, everybody goes to Broadway. Everybody goes, you know, they come in and they go restaurants and not so we had the Restaurant Revitalization Program that tried to help some of these restaurants. But there are other parts of the creative ecosystem. You just talked about a costume supplier. We had a lot of people that were hurt in New York City when the film industry and Broadway was shut down.

Can you go a little further with what you were just saying? You talked about costumes. Who else do we need to expand it to if there was another tranche of money coming, like who was left out?

Mr. ELROD. Oh, well, I think that is one of the things where I would like to pivot towards like a GAO report or a congressional commission so that you can hear from more than just four of us. To like really get the Brian Blythes of the world in front of you to like really talk about who was there and who was left out. I think that would be the most important thing to do because I think one of the problems is we do not even know what we do not know as I was saying. The wave has come in and the damage is not yet knowable. Also our NAICS codes do not appropriately include the entirety of the creative economy. And so without understanding the fullness of the creative economy, we also do not know who slipped through the cracks.

Mr. GARBARINO. Yeah. So the dust has not completely settled yet and you will not know probably at least until everything is up and running again at full speed, what is missing? Okay. I understand that.

I was in the state legislature for New York for 8 years. New York had very generous, I thought, tax program to help bring moves and TV shows to the state to get film credits. Congress here, we did PPP. We did the Shuttered Venue Operators grant program. And there are a couple people from a couple different states here. Can you talk about what the states have done? Because we also sent them a lot of money to help with more local issues and we have Oregon, I think, and Missouri and New York. Have any of those states done anything since the pandemic shut everything down to help your industries in addition to what Congress has done?

Ms. Garrett?

Ms. GARRETT. Thank you very much for the question. Yes. So very early in the pandemic, a group of arts organizations that were much more highly resourced. Some of our smaller organizations got together and lobbied for CARES Act funding. So we received as a coalition of performing arts theaters, performing arts venues, the ballet, the symphony, the opera. OSF at another theater called Portland Center stage. We lobbied for $8 million in CARES Act funding. And that was actually the thing that buoyed us and actually brought me to lobby with the Professional Nonprofit Theater Coalition, lobby for access to SVOG funding. So once we knew we could do it, we did it again. And we were really grateful for the CARES Act funding. We talked to some of our other colleagues across the country to try to help them figure out ways to lobby for some of those resources. In these times, every little dime, every little bit counts.

I also wanted to go back to your question to Carson. There are a lot of theater workers who are not recognized as such—carpenters, stitchers, ushers. A lot of those folks are only paid when shows are running. And so they were not necessarily affected by industry-specific funds. And so being really clear about the full impact across the industry, you know, our ushers work every single time a show gets up ad they are just as important as the people who stand on page. But there is no way to fund them except through unemployment during the pandemic. Those are the things that we have to think about.

Whereas, when we did do the streaming of the shows, we paid everybody. Everybody was a part of this production. We paid every single person. But we were not able to pay the ushers and the carpenters did not receive any kind of funding for that.

Mr. GARBARINO. Mr. Elrod, you said you wanted to further answer something?

Mr. Carson?

Mr. ELROD. Basically, exactly what Ms. Garrett said. I was thinking of the Small Business Committee, so I think I was thinking of small businesses but I probably forgot to leave out the real group of people that has been left out are the arts workers themselves. And that is why expanded unemployment is important. That is why something like the Creative Economy Revitalization Act which would give money directly to arts workers to apply their trade and bring them into the public sphere and make festivals and murals and public works of Art and the Arts education for All Act. There are so many things that are in front of Congress right now that would help so many of those people that have fallen through.

And I was embarrassed that it slipped my mind. Of course, the arts workers themselves are the most important people that have kind of been left out of the equation.

Ms. CHU. The gentleman's time has expired.

And we have now reached to the end of our Member questions. So I will now do my closing statement.

I want to thank our panel again for being here today. Your stories of preserving through the pandemic demonstrate the resilience and fortitude of your industry. But it is very clear that you still face many challenges today.

For our economy to fully recover, we must work together to overcome the hardships and challenges facing the creative economy. Unfortunately, we cannot reverse the damage overnight. It will take sustained support and investment to bring these businesses back to where they once were. We must work together to advance policies that drive recovery in the near-term and pave the way for future success. The American Creative Economy is one of our most significant resources and we cannot afford to leave it behind.

With that, I would ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 legislative days to submit statements and supporting materials for the record.

Without objection, so ordered.

And if there is no further business to come before the Committee, we are adjourned. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:03 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Written Testimony of Carson Elrod
Co-Founder, Be An #ArtsHero campaign
Co-Founder, Director of Government Affairs and Public Policy, Arts Workers United

U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Small Business Hearing on "The Power, The Peril, and the Promise of the Creative Economy"

January 17, 2022

Introduction

Chairwoman Velazquez, Ranking Member Leutkemeyer, esteemed members of the Small Business Committee, thank you for your invitation to join today's proceedings and thank you for holding this groundbreaking hearing on the Creative Economy.

I am an Arts Worker. I'm a classically trained professional actor, director, teacher, with over 25 years of experience performing on Broadway, off-Broadway, regionally, in feature films such as *Wedding Crashers* and *Kissing Jessica Stein*, on TV shows like *30 Rock* and *High Maintenance*, and in national commercials. Like so many of the 5.2 million Arts Workers of America, I'm a mixed-income worker, which means I cobble together my income from a combination of disparate and wildly different employers.

In a normal year, I usually work multiple contracts of different lengths in multiple states. In the span of 6 months, I could act for a non-profit regional theatre in Baltimore, a for-profit television network shooting in Georgia, and teach for an academic institution in Illinois. As many Arts Workers can attest, making a living in this highly competitive field requires skillful resourcefulness, even in the best of times.

In January of 2020, I had the good fortune to be cast in a recurring role on *The Good Fight* for CBS. While I am proud to say I've had some notable successes as an Arts Worker, this recurring role signaled a new chapter in my career both financially and professionally. In fact, on March 9th, I received an email letting me know that my part was about to get significantly bigger and that I should keep March, April, and May available for a lot of shooting. I was ecstatic. 2020 seemed poised to be one of my best ever. On March 11th, as I was celebrating this new chapter with a friend in midtown Manhattan, the bar became silent as the bartender turned up the volume on the TV: our governor was announcing that Broadway was being ordered to shut down. All over, the curtains were coming down and the lights were going out.

What followed next is a narrative familiar to millions of Arts Workers: my world was turned completely upside down. I lost not just my work for *The Good Fight*, but two other

jobs— and any audition for my next job—evaporated. In one sudden, unexpected jolt I joined the ranks of nearly 3 million of my fellow Arts Workers in total unemployment. I watched as our industry suffered an unprecedented system-wide shockwave that sent colleagues and friends into a psychological, physiological, and financial tailspin.

Within a week of the shutdown, the virus became very real, very quickly for me. Mark Blum, an actor whom I deeply respected, died of Covid-19. His death was a harbinger of the devastation, despair, and death yet to come.

Congress's swift action with The CARES Act, and especially the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program, extended a temporary life-saving intervention for Arts Workers across the country. But even as the CARES act relief made its way into the economy, long-time institutions closed permanently, talent agencies quickly went out of business without their Artists' commissions, and the fabric of the reality of my life began to unravel daily.

After the shock and depression of what was happening had subsided, I decided to commit myself to trying to help myself and my fellow Arts Workers find a way forward in the midst of utter devastation. I wanted a reason to wake up in the morning and for me,

service to others is a good one. In June of 2020, I joined Brooke Ishibashi, Jenny Grace Makholm, and Matthew-Lee Erlbach to start **Be An #ArtsHero** and later a non-profit social welfare organization called **Arts Workers United.** Be An #ArtsHero grew into a grassroots campaign led by distressed Arts Workers making the case to the Federal Government that our sector requires relief and investment commensurate with our socio-economic value. We took to social media, we took to the streets, and we began scheduling meetings with policymakers to make our case that America's Arts & Culture workers and our employers were in deep trouble and needed immediate action. We weren't professional advocates—we'd never done anything like this before in our lives. But we had to do **something.** And once we started, we were heartened to learn that by every measurable standard, America's dynamic Creative Economy isn't a cause– it's an incredibly important and vital *industry*. The more I learned, the easier it was to make the case for preserving and investing in our nation's creative industries.

POWER

The Creative Economy is made up of over 673,000 businesses, many of them small businesses, that strengthen our cities, towns, and rural communities in all 435 Congressional districts. We represent over 5.2 million highly skilled American jobs that

generate at least $919.7 billion in value-added to GDP. Our Creative Economy is driven not only by big movie studios or giant entertainment conglomerates, but also hundreds of thousands of small businesses like costume shops and nonprofits that provide after-school Art classes for students. **In fact, 85% of performing arts companies have less than 20 full time employees.**

It is surprising to many to learn that the Creative Economy represents **4.3% of our GDP, generating five times the value added to GDP than Agriculture** and $**223 billion more than Transportation.** And most promisingly, pre-pandemic, the Arts & Culture sector had a **growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that of the total U.S. economy!**

Our museums, theatres, festivals, symphonies, and ballets are like **stars that anchor solar systems of interdependent local commercial businesses** such as restaurants, bars, coffee shops, costume shops, hardware stores, hotels, airlines, and tourism. **In fact, 68% of all tourism is cultural,** and cultural tourists spend nearly twice as much as their non-cultural counterparts.

From Kansas to Kentucky and Alaska to Alabama, each state boasts tens of thousands of Arts Workers. The commercial, non-profit, and arts-related businesses that

comprise the Creative Economy drive **at least $1 billion dollars in value added in each and every state.**

Investing in Arts & Culture businesses has proven time and again to be a concrete economic development strategy for a local economy.

In 1986, North Adams, Massachusetts faced a challenge. The Sprague factory, which employed 4,137 workers in a community of 18,000, shuttered its doors for good, leaving the town of North Adams in a dire socio-economic quandary. The business and political leaders of North Adams strategized together on how to re-use the vast Sprague complex. North Adams Mayor John Barrett III suggested creating a contemporary arts center in collaboration with Williams College Museum of Art. Through private and public support, the Sprague factory was turned into one of the premiere modern art museums in the world, the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (or MassMoCA). North Adams is now a global tourist destination, and the collateral light of an Arts star like Mass MoCA supports breweries, restaurants, bed & breakfasts, coffee shops, cocktail bars, and a host of other small businesses that chose to open in North Adams because of it.

In 1991, Springboard for the Arts in Fergus Falls, MN, was given a $25,000 NEA grant. They were able to leverage that grant into a fundraising campaign that earned them $1.2 million in order to provide residencies for Artists. In 2006, Springboard moved into an abandoned hospital and turned it into an arts space with opportunities for Artists in Residence. Shortly thereafter, Springboard began to create that star-like gravity that pulled in new residents and new small businesses including clothing shops, a brewery, and pizza shop. A modest public investment thirty one years ago continues to bring prosperity and community cohesion to Fergus Falls. "We've done exactly what an investor would want to see: [we've] taken the [NEA] money and leveraged it into private investment...As a return on investment, that small amount of public dollars has really meant a lot of leverage and visibility and a lot of investment into that community," said Laura Zabel, Springboard's executive director.

PERIL

If our Arts & Culture businesses are like stars that anchor solar systems of interdependent local commercial businesses, **then, should one of these stars implode, it creates a black hole that threatens to suck that entire interdependent local economy into a dark collapse. Multiply that across a nation and you have a cataclysm of**

galactic proportions. As we speak, many of these stars are doing just that, much to the dismay of the communities that rely on them.

According to a study by the Brookings Institution, Arts & Culture lost an estimated **$150 Billion in sales in just the first four months of the pandemic and 2.7 million jobs.** Cinema revenue took an estimated $9.2 billion dollar hit after ticket sales declined by 96.4%, especially hitting smaller movie theater businesses hard, causing theaters like Chalmette Movies in Louisiana to close permanently or the Majestic Theater in Crested Butte, Colorado to appeal to crowd-sourcing in order to reopen. Small business comedy venues like Upright Citizens Brigade, People's Improv Theater, Creek and Cave, and Dangerfield's closed for good, while others like Second City went up for sale. Cirque du Soleil laid off 95% of its workforce— and forcing the company into bankruptcy. Disney resorts laid off over 11,350 employees, 720 of whom were AEA union performers. Most of Broadway's 97,000 jobs were lost. Several shows forced to close during the pandemic never reopened, including *Mean Girls*, the revival of *West Side Story*, and Disney's *Frozen*. Highly anticipated musical *Six* was set to open on March 12, 2020—the day Broadway closed for months.

The 15-month closure of our nation's Arts & Culture venues has had a devastating impact on Arts & Culture workers and the communities they live in, and, with new variants like Omicron our return remains precarious.

In June 2021, I had the privilege to be cast in one of the first two live plays produced in NYC on the other side of the pandemic, performing in *Seize the King* for the Classical Theatre of Harlem. It was an honor to help usher live theatre back into New Yorkers' lives. The show was well received, and I was asked to reprise my role in a limited Off-Broadway engagement in March. It felt as though NYC theater was finally regaining its footing, and my career thankfully began to resume after the "great intermission."

Directly afterwards, I was cast in a successful Off-Broadway comedy, "The Alchemist" for Red Bull Theatre. We'd spent months making audiences laugh and giving people a reason to come spend money in Midtown Manhattan.

On December 15th, I tested positive for Covid. That night's performance of *The Alchemist* was cancelled. The following day two more members of my company tested positive. With no understudies and our crew also sick, the theatre cancelled the rest of our

run. While isolating with Covid alone over the holidays, I got an email that the Classical Theater of Harlem was cancelling it's off-Broadway reprisal of *Seize The King*.due to the Omicron variant of COVID-19.

Many live performance venues have begun investigating streaming options as a way to adapt to our shifting pandemic landscape. Red Bull Theater, a small business, had hoped to bring the cast and crew back this week to film *The Alchemist* in order to recoup some of it's losses and provide it's workers with an additional paycheck. But, with the new surge in hospitalizations and the infection rate of Omicron, that too was cancelled. In an eerie echo of March 2020, I watched in horror as Omicron swept through New York theater casts and crews, resulting in closures and cancellations.

My story is not unique; all across the country, musicians, arts educators, comedians, circus performers, dancers— everyone who relies on the ability to safely gather to do their work are trying to navigate our new pandemic reality. The U.S. Census Bureau's Small Business Pulse Survey reports that "arts, entertainment, and recreation" businesses are among those most likely to take longer than 6 months to recover from the pandemic. According to Americans for the Arts' most recent Covid report: "99% of producing and presenting organizations [are cancelling] events during the pandemic—**a loss of $557**

million in ticketed admissions, impacting both arts organizations and audiences. Additionally, local area businesses—restaurants, lodging, retail, and parking—were severely impacted by cancelled arts and culture events with a loss of $17.6 billion in audience ancillary spending. Local government revenue losses were $6.0 billion and 1.03 million jobs were negatively affected because of cancelled events**. BIPOC organizations were more likely to report that they lack the financial resources needed to return to in-person programming than non-BIPOC organizations (55% vs. 38%). And it's important to note, all of this data is from months ago and does not tell the total story of the peril we now face.**

34% of Arts Workers are self-employed, and 75% of Arts Workers are freelancers or 1099 workers, working gig to gig, making health insurance an out of pocket expense. But for many unionized Arts Workers like myself, we rely on our employers and weeks of employment to qualify for our health insurance.

My union, Actor's Equity Association, determines its members' qualifications for insurance based on the number of weeks we work. Due to a lack of employer contributions, our union had to radically change the work week requirements and significantly increase premiums, making it even more difficult for members to be insured

during a deadly pandemic. During the fifteen month shutdown, nearly **every single member of my union became disqualified for our insurance**. I myself lost my union health insurance in March. The COBRA subsidies Congress passed, while expensive, helped me keep my insurance until September when the subsidies expired. Now, for the first time in my life, I qualify for and rely on Medicaid for my health care.

Despite all of this, I feel it is incumbent that I acknowledge my incredible privilege. My particular sphere of the Creative Economy is heavily unionized, and because of that I have had a lot of benefits that aren't available to many in the Creative Economy who aren't yet unionized. Additionally, my racial and economic privilege allowed me the time and resources to be able to commit myself to full-time advocacy. I stand before you in Congress because I was financially able to devote the last two years of my life to advocating for Arts Workers like myself. And it should go without saying, but let me state it clearly: I have suffered far less than Arts Workers who are people from historically marginalized communities. The BIPOC, LGBTQ+ and disabled communities have suffered disproportionately during Covid-19 from greater infection rates, inadequate health care, and death frequency. **According to Americans for the Arts' most recent Covid report: "BIPOC [Arts Workers] had higher rates of unemployment than white artists in 2020 due to the pandemic (69% vs. 60%) and lost a larger percentage of their creative**

income (61% vs. 56%). In addition, Arts Workers from these communities, who are large contributors to the Arts economy, have suffered even more from lost jobs, lost wages, food insecurity and homelessness.

I'm haunted by the stories of Arts Workers who have struggled during this pandemic— stories like Patsy Bouressa's who works for the SIMS Foundation in Austin, TX, which provides mental health and addiction resources to music workers. Patsy revealed that every time a music venue announced they were closing their doors for good, their crisis line would spike with hopeless Arts Workers who didn't know how to go on living without a functioning Creative Economy. In the month of September of 2020 alone, four Arts Workers in her region had died by suicide following news of a music venue closure.

I think of Sandy Espinosa, from Roadie Cares, who is at the front lines supporting our touring roadies who have been unable to work for nearly two years. These blue-collar workers, whose identities are all tied to their roles as providers for their families have suffered devastating financial losses, resulting in foreclosures, bankruptcies, divorce, suicide, and in some particularly dark cases, family annihilation.

I don't think we are even close to understanding the mental health impacts of this crisis on Arts Workers and how many we've lost.

PROMISE

If our Arts & Culture businesses are like stars that anchor solar systems of interdependent local commercial businesses, then the most exciting aspect of the Creative Economy is its promise to be the most sure-fire way to recover from this perilous moment.

The Arts have an outsized rate of return on investment. Studies have shown that **$1 of federal arts spending leverages back $9 in public and private spending.** Additionally, an artistic component reliably improves efficacy and outcomes to nearly everything that they touch. From providing effective therapies for our veterans suffering from PTSD, to improving educational outcomes, to providing revolutionary ways to improve public health, adding an Artistic or creative element brings measurable improvement and efficacy to any organization, department, business, or community it touches.

Thankfully, Congress currently possesses the tools to ensure that the country's Arts Workers and the small businesses that employ them have the resources they need to survive and thrive. In December of 2020, in a paradigm-shifting moment of historic proportions, Congress acknowledged the plight of live event venues and passed the **Save Our Stages Act.** SVOG grants have been a lifeline and have put a floor underneath a specific sector of devastated brick and mortar creative small businesses. However, the live entertainment venue sector makes up only a small fraction of the large and fragile Creative Economy. Save Our Stages is an inspiring and encouraging intervention and represents a new relationship between Congress and the Creative Economy.

Today, I'm here to encourage Congress to **keep going!** Right now, an unprecedented number of exciting pieces of Creative Economy-focused legislation have been introduced to Congress. I urge the committee to contemplate them all, including the **Performing Artist Tax Parity Act, the CREATE Act, the PLACE act, the Creative Economy Revitalization Act, the Arts Education for All Act, and the New Federal Writers Project,** among others. Enacted together, these bills, currently awaiting passage in Congress, would result in a Creative Economy super package. Guaranteeing access to the Arts for every student in the country would prepare a whole generation to **carry the legacy of our culture** and develop the imagination, skills, and creativity to take on our

nation's biggest challenges while preparing them for the jobs of the 21st Century. These interventions would get American Arts Workers working again, doing what they do best: strengthening communities, inspiring entrepreneurial innovation, and providing reliable economic benefits for every district in the country.

I know that this hearing is slated to have a conversation about infrastructure. One aspect of the recent infrastructure package was to "remediate idle real property." Imagine if Congress earmarked resources to remediate idle real property all over the country into mixed use Arts spaces, rock clubs, museums, cultural heritage sites, and more, just like MassMoCA or Springboard for the Arts? Congress could become the architects of creation, signing into law a **big bang that would ignite a universe of Art stars across the country, each with its own ability to spontaneously pull into its orbit all of those supporting small businesses.**

Due to the pandemic, unemployment remains rampant for America's Arts Workers through no fault of their own. Therefore, it's imperative that regardless of geography, tribal status,or self-employment status, that they be able to qualify for unemployment benefits and receive them as long as it takes to get to the other side of the pandemic. Our economy can't afford to lose our Arts Workers to other industries where their overall financial impact

on the economy won't be as profoundly felt. It's imperative that systems be put in place to maintain this highly- skilled workforce.

I'd be remiss if I didn't also recommend that we fully fund our NEA, NEH, CPB, and IMLS at levels that make us competitive with Germany, England, and Canada. I know that these agencies, which helped us establish our global reputation and win the Cold War have, in recent decades, become partisan punching bags. But I urge us all to **reframe how we think about these agencies, so that we can see them as economic agencies, like the SBA,** that provide support and investment for a universally beloved aspect of American life that consistently strengthens and creates dynamic local economies. These agencies provide resources that directly result in thriving local economies. Modest investment; monumental reward.

CONCLUSION

Two hours and four witnesses can only just begin to scratch the surface of what can be learned and gained from Congress more fully engaging with and investing in our nation's Arts Workers and the Creative Economy.

I sincerely hope that Congress will commission a GAO report on the Power, the Peril, and the Promise of the nation's Creative economy. I hope that Congress will establish a congressional commission to further explore these issues. I promise the outcomes would be economically beneficial and culturally enriching for every one of your voting constituents. In fact, Americans are twice as likely to vote for a candidate who increases federal arts spending.

Finally, **I hope that Congress will work with the President to immediately create a Secretary of Arts & Culture to oversee targeted investment in the Creative Economy and sit on the Domestic Policy Council.** Our Arts & Culture sector is powerful because these are the small businesses and workers by which we come to entertain ourselves, to define ourselves, and to know ourselves in every city, town, and rural community nationwide.

The Creative Economy and its Arts Workers make our country stronger. Psychologically stronger. Socially stronger. Economically stronger. This sector holds the jobs of the future. **You have the opportunity to help ignite not just a sunrise, but a supernova of creative small businesses that will trigger a chain reaction of such socio-economic prosperity that history will remember this Congress as the Congress**

that provided the rocket fuel needed to pioneer a new American century defined by the incredible labor of American Arts Workers and the Creative Economy they uphold.

An Urban Institute study found that 96% of Americans valued art in their lives, while only 27% valued Artists. It's my sincerest intention that this hearing can mark a watershed moment in our nation's history in which we change that.

I hope you'll all join me in changing the conversation about Arts Workers and the Creative Economy. If you do so, our nation's Arts Workers and creative industries will lead a supercharged socio-economic recovery. **On the other side of the plague was the Renaissance. On the other side of the 1918 flu was the "Roaring 20s"**. Congress can ensure that America's Arts Workers and Creative small businesses are positioned to herald in a bright new dawn, illuminated by the sunlight of the nation's Creative Economy. Thank you.

This testimony represents my own personal experience, but is reliant on almost two years' worth of data aggregation that we would like to share with the committee as an addendum to this testimony. Our report, as well as proposals for working with Congress to

ensure that Arts Workers have the resources they need to help revitalize the entire American economy, can be found here: **The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1TLJKzmEgvN7zl51ToRoQEkey-0G1FpCnOMj5dNCAWgc]

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United States House of Representatives, Committee on Small Business
The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy
January 19, 2022
Nataki Garrett, Oregon Shakespeare Festival

Chairwoman Velazquez, Ranking Member Leutkemeyer and members of the House Committee on Small Business, thank you for inviting me to appear before you today. My name is Nataki Garrett and I am the Artistic Director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. I am honored to be with you and share how the arts sector has been affected by COVID-19, to highlight our economic and social impact, and to offer ways Congress can support the recovery of the creative economy.

The Oregon Shakespeare Festival, or OSF for short, has for 86 years, since its founding in 1935 grown into one of the leaders of modern American theater and one of the largest economic drivers of the Southern Oregon economy. OSF is one of the last remaining rotating repertory theater companies in the Country. In a typical year we welcome over 400,000 people from all over the world visit our three theaters including the oldest Elizabethan theater in the US. Our patrons spend more than one hundred million dollars annually as a direct result of attending theatre events at OSF. Ashland, our town of 20,000 people, has the same density of restaurants and hotels per resident as New York and Paris. With the economic multiplier effect, it is estimated that OSF generates more than a quarter billion dollars of economic activity in the Southern Oregon region annually. We are responsible for a full 20% of overall economic activity in the Rogue River Valley. Simply put, the arts are a powerful economic engine that drives our region and enriches our lives.

When COVID-19 hit in March 2020, OSF had just opened our season, my first as Artistic Director. Within six days we went from celebrating the kickoff of a $44 million slate of productions to having to shut everything down and pivot into a fight for our survival. We had already spent about half of our total annual budget to get shows ready for the stage, and we had taken in more than $6 million in ticket revenue that had to be refunded.

Over the next few weeks, 90% of Oregon Shakespeare Festival's nearly 500-person workforce was laid off, 829 performances of our 11 scheduled productions were shuttered, and 2,300 community engagement and education events were canceled. We provided what assistance we could to the artists who had uprooted their lives to come spend a 9-month season at OSF, but we knew that our best wasn't going to be enough. Our community was thrown into an

economic freefall, and there wasn't a business in the area that didn't feel the adverse effect of OSF shuttering its season.

In addition, in September of the same year the Almeda fire swept through the region and destroyed more than 2300 homes and businesses, including the homes of many of the remaining few OSF employees. We as a community again leapt into action to help our neighbors. OSF set up a food bank and provided emergency housing and any other support we could muster. We dedicated a significant part of our annual Gala fundraiser, originally conceived to help us survive the pandemic, to helping our neighbors survive a year of unimaginable loss. Through it all, I was stunned and humbled by the perseverance of our staff and patrons and artists.

I'm still haunted by the choices I had to make to try to ensure OSF's survival. Having to prioritize retaining administrative staff who could help bring in grant and donor revenue and maintain our facilities at the expense of the artists who are at the center of our work. Imagine having to choose between the hundreds of crew members, craft artisans, carpentry masters, actors, playwrights, directors, and other artists or choose those who drive and maintain the operations of the organization. The entire creative economy was forced to make that awful choice because of the pandemic and because we seldom recognize the sacrifice that the artist continues to endure.

I went to work every day and put on a brave face as I watched the situation become more and more desperate for OSF and our friends and neighbors throughout the state. Behind the mask I was afraid. Afraid OSF wouldn't make it. Afraid that our fall would take out most of the businesses around us. Afraid that our failure to survive the nearly unsurvivable would reverberate through all of the arts industries for a generation. Afraid that I would be the last Artistic Director at OSF, and the one who had to turn out the lights for the very last time. Our future balanced on a sword-edge, and we all felt it. It was without a doubt one of the darkest times in my professional life.

The reality is that without the sacrifices of the artists, and without the infusion of state and federal dollars, along with the generosity of our donors and audience members we would not be in existence, and I would not be testifying before you today. I would like to extend my appreciation for the assistance this committee provided to the performing arts industry through the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program and other forms of COVID relief that have helped us weather the pandemic.

During many sleepless nights over the past two years, I think about the hundreds of thousands of artists around this country who drive so much of our economy but themselves live in poverty. How can we keep building our businesses, winning awards, and taking bows on the backs of people who are constantly struggling to survive and to and create? How can we continue viewing an industry that makes up more of our GDP than Agriculture and Mining combined as a luxury or a frivolity and the purview of the elite? How can we look the more than 5.2 million arts and culture workers in this country in the eye and not take the simple, common-

sense steps to make their lives more secure and our economy more robust all at once? How can we continue cutting arts programs in schools when we know that students who participate in arts education are more likely to go to college and less likely to go to jail?

The challenges we face in the arts did not start and will not end with the pandemic. COVID-19 further exacerbated existing struggles that have long threatened the creative economy. We do not need a band-aid, we need long-term solutions that will help sustain the arts in communities across the country.

At OSF we have a tradition. Following the curtain call of our last outdoor play each season, everyone in the company, not just actors but administrative staff, custodians, and every one of the people who work so hard to bring our art to life, each carry a candle and silently enter the darkened 1200 seat Elizabethan theater to the strains of *Greensleeves*. A veteran company member speaks Prospero's speech from Act IV Scene 1 of Shakespeare's "*The Tempest.*" The Bard's words begin with, "Our revels now are ended..." and fill the silent space like a prayer...a promise, 1200 audience members from all walks of life, all religions, all affiliations, all races, all experiences hang on every line. When the speech is done, the candles are blown out and the entire company silently and reverently exits the theater followed by the audience. It marks the ending of a season of hard work and beautiful artmaking, and the promise that the house lights will be kindled once more in the spring when we begin the whole glorious dance again. It is a moment of power and profound vulnerability and is one of the highlights of our artistic year. In 2020, I was afraid that those candles had gone out forever. But I am here to tell you that what is built endures, and what is loved endures, and as artistic director, I am committed to ensuring that those candles burn bright and those words are spoken for years to come.

You have the power, here and now, to ensure that the flickering candle of the creative economy can burn brightly. Right now, bills such as *The Creative Economy Revitalization Act*, *The Performing Arts Parity Act*, and the *Arts Education for All Act*, bipartisan bills that positively impact the economies of red states and blue states alike and enjoy broad public support, are waiting for Congress to act. You can help so many people and be heroes in your own communities by showing that you understand the value of the economic engine that is the Arts in this country. And it's not a radical act. It's not an act of faith or hope. It's not partisan and it's not controversial. It's recognizing a simple fact that the example of OSF and countless other arts organizations have proven over and over again. It's recognizing that the arts and artists drive local economies and at the same time lift people out of darkness.

Thank you for this time, thank you for what you will do next, and I look forward to your questions.

The Promise of the Creative Economy: Shared Prosperity Through Strong Worker Standards

Statement of Sandra Karas

On Behalf of Actors' Equity

Before the House Committee on Small Business

19 January 2022

Chairwoman Velazquez, ranking member Luetkemeyer, thank you for the invitation today. I'm Sandra Karas, an actor, Secretary-Treasurer of Actors' Equity Association a member of SAG-AFTRA's New York local board and an alternate to the SAG-AFTRA national board. I also appear before you as a small business owner. I'm a tax attorney, accountant, and financial advisor with a practice here in New York.

You are going to hear today about the power of the creative economy, and the live arts in particular – rightly so. The arts and culture sector is responsible for 5.2 million jobs and 4.3 percent of GDP. The live arts have a huge halo effect on small business – every time someone goes to see a live event, they spend on restaurants for dinner, parking garages and taxis for travel, hotels to stay overnight, and childcare. Nationally, that amounts to more than $100 billion in additional spending, much of it spent at small businesses.

The creative economy shows how we can drive economic growth for business **AND** workers. The reason for that is unions. I'm speaking to you today on behalf of Actors' Equity Association, the union representing actors and stage managers in the live theater. For more than a century, Equity members have organized and set standards and working conditions in theaters across the country. Our members work from Los Angeles' 99-seat non-profits, to Kansas City's Starlight and St. Louis' Rep, to Buffalo's Kavinoky, and the Wintergarden on Broadway -- and everywhere in between. We have negotiated contracts that include health care, pensions – and even profit sharing for some productions. As the original gig workers, we are the proof that companies need not choose between profits and W-2 employee protections.

The pandemic has indeed created a crisis. While many businesses have recovered, the new variant has brought tremendous uncertainty and job loss in the live arts once again. Since December, some nine Broadway shows have closed, some permanently, others until spring. Closings and delays are happening around the country right now. In Minnesota, just last week the Gutherie delayed one show and canceled another. When shows close and are delayed, that means lost earnings and health insurance put at risk for everyone, not just the actors and stage managers. When live events close, small businesses also feel the crunch. In Times Square, holiday foot traffic was down nearly 30 percent from pre-pandemic levels. A quarter of area businesses remain closed. Our industry is not "back to normal."

There is one way you can help all of us arts workers. Congress has an opportunity to pass the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act or PATPA, which modernizes a provision enacted by President Ronald Reagan and will provide relief to entertainment workers.

Performing artists pay a high percentage of their income on necessary out-of-pocket costs to look for work and stay current in the industry. We pay agents and managers, transportation to auditions, to maintain our websites, headshots, video reels – and more. It can amount to 20-30 percent of our gross income. Previously this was deductible. But because of an unintended consequence of tax reform, we lost the deductions of our unreimbursed business expenses. This means a tax increase, often of thousands of dollars for working-class artists.

I have seen heartbreaking stories at the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program, housed in the Equity office, where volunteers process thousands of free tax returns annually for low-income arts workers. One young taxpayer, upon learning that his liability increased by more than 30%, wondered aloud how he was going to pay his rent.

As we return to work, the last thing we need is a tax code that punishes us for **seeking** work. This bill is targeted to low-income and middle-class taxpayers, **not** the high-earning stars. It is consistent with the original goal of tax reform, to give working and middle-class taxpayers a break. I commend Representatives Chu and Buchanan for leading the effort to pass this bill in the House. Thank you, also to Representatives Newman, and Garbarino for cosponsoring. I ask you all for your support.

The Performing Artist Tax Parity Act is Equity's top legislative priority. It is endorsed by unions AND employers. But it is not our only priority. We also released a federal policy agenda for inclusion in the arts, in partnership with our fellow arts unions. We believe the National Endowment for the Arts should create a chief diversity officer to drive inclusion deeper into the grant process. And we strongly support the CROWN Act to end hair discrimination in our industry.

On behalf of all the arts unions, I want to thank the small business committee for helping to make sure that unions were treated fairly during the pandemic by allowing access to the paycheck protection program. Our staff worked harder than ever and this program was a lifeline. During the pandemic our staff pivoted – we helped thousands of members navigate confusing state unemployment systems. We partnered with former head of OSHA, Dr. David Michaels to develop new COVID safety standards, and shared our research with employers to help keep everyone safe. And of course, we worked around the clock to make sure employers lived up to their obligations to pay members what they were owed and maintain a safe workplace. We also made a direct contribution to The Actors Fund during the early days of the pandemic to help members pay rent and basic human needs.

There are some other critical gains that were made during the pandemic that should continue. Congress expanded subsidies for the Affordable Care Act during the pandemic, which was critical for our industry. We hope those subsidies are renewed. The unemployment system still needs serious reform. Because pandemic supplemental unemployment provisions have expired, workers in our industry are getting by on as little as $275 a week in some states.

I will conclude today where I started. The arts sector is a robust contributor to our national economy because of a strong union presence, not in spite of it. In an industry where competition is keen and there are more workers than jobs, we ensure workers have a voice in their workplace, secure standards and safe working conditions.

Some have suggested that we should lower standards and realign federal policy to promote independent contractors. We disagree. Those who suggest otherwise too often do not disclose that independent contractors lack the protections that come with W2 employment, like workers'

compensation and unemployment insurance, disability insurance, and employer contributions to Social Security and Medicare. The federal definition of employee is someone whose work is controlled by another, including when, where, and at what rate of pay. Entertainment professionals are hired, directed, and controlled by the employer, who engages these employees in the normal course of business operations. Our employers rely on a ready work force to show up on time and with the skills necessary to perform the job. In return, they agree to provide decent wages and working conditions and the employer protections under the law. As we've just seen during the pandemic, these are critical basic protections that all workers should have, especially in the arts.

That is why the PRO Act has our full support. It will reform outdated labor laws and protect against exploitation and employee misclassification, which is unfortunately far too common in our industry. It will help the arts and culture sector – and workers – prosper into the next century. A healthy arts and culture sector with strong worker protections means not only shared prosperity and economic development, but that our nation is able to have moments where we come together through the live arts to connect with one another, to share an experience, to dream, and to sometimes even deepen our capacity for empathy.

That is the true promise of the creative economy.

Sandra Karas
Secretary-Treasurer
Actors' Equity Association

Testimony before the House Committee on Small Business

United States House of Representatives

Hearing on "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy"

Testimony by Raeanne Presley

Co-Owner, Presleys' Country Jubilee Theater

Secretary, Plains Chapter of the National Independent Venue Association (NIVA)

January 19, 2022

Good morning Chairwoman Velázquez, Ranking Member Luetkemeyer, and distinguished members of this Committee. Thank you for inviting me to testify and to add my voice to the important topic of today's hearing: "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy."

I join you today from my home in Branson, Missouri, which is located in Southwest Missouri and is known worldwide for its family friendly tourism. Entertainment, and the creative spirit that drives this industry, is at the heart of our community. I've been fortunate to see Branson and our entire region grow – both in expansion of tourism and economic opportunity.

Here is my story. I moved to Branson in the late 1960s and lived with my parents in a small resort along Lake Taneycomo. Branson was known at the time for the beautiful Ozark hills, the White River system of lakes including Table Rock, the story and nighttime drama re-creation of The Shepherd of the Hills, and Silver Dollar City, a theme park that would grow to be a leading name around the world.

Here is where the live music and comedy shows make their debut. In 1967, the Presley family, including my future husband Steve, opened the Original Show on the Highway 76 Strip. Highway 76 was a two-lane road located between the lakes, Silver Dollar City and downtown Branson. Lloyd and Bessie Presley, along with their four children, dreamed of entertaining the fishermen and families with wholesome comedy and music – country, bluegrass, gospel, and patriotic. My husband Steve was ten years old when the theater opened, and he sat on a wooden log to play one snare drum. His brother, Gary, played the part of Herkimer, an Ozark icon to this very day. His sisters, Deanna and Janice, were the talented vocalists in beehive hairdos and gingham dresses. Opening a theater on a small two-lane highway was risky, to say the least, but the Presley family was passionate about live entertainment and determined to make their living at it. This exemplifies and speaks to the entrepreneurial spirit of many in our Independent Venue world. And it is exactly this creative entrepreneurial spirit that built Branson, Missouri.

Fast forward to today. Gary and Pat Presley, Steve and I are the owners. Presleys' Country Jubilee will open our 56th season two months from now. Our theater seats 1,500 people and has been expanded nine times over the years to accommodate more customers. We are so grateful that demand has grown and our business has grown with it. Yet the heart of the show and how we do business remains the same. Ushers to take you to your seat. Concessionaires provide Coke, popcorn, and cinnamon nuts to enjoy as you laugh and sing along. Our preshow features a gospel singalong in our mezzanine. Entertainers will chat with you at intermission and after the show. Maybe the only thing that has changed is that now, because of COVID-19, they can no longer board tour buses after the show to thank you for coming and to wish you safe travels back home. But the feeling of joyfulness and gratitude is everlasting.

Our theater employs 70 people, full-time and part-time during the season, and we perform more than 200 shows each year from March to December. We also have a weekly television show on RFD TV that has an average viewership of more than 300,000 each week. Our entertainers, from comedians to musicians to vocalists, are each unique and valuable jewels. They have spent years perfecting their craft, and they are the solid base that allows our small business to continue.

My story is entwined deeply with the Presley family and the Branson tourism industry. I married that drummer, Steve, in 1976, and our love and partnership is here to stay! I remind folks that I

can neither sing nor dance, but I join more than 15 Presley family members and spouses who contribute in many ways, from on stage performances, to running our small business, to creating marketing materials for the entire area.

Early on I found my calling as, what my husband refers to, a Professional Volunteer. Besides my day-to-day job of accounting and human resources for Presleys', I sought to learn and grow in the world of boards, commissions, strategic planning and more. I have been honored to serve on regional and state boards, including hospital boards, airport boards, and charitable organizations. In 2009, I was chosen as a Missourian Award recipient. I have chaired the Missouri Tourism Commission, and most recently, I served eight years as Mayor of Branson, seeing our community through floods, a tornado, and steering a service-based economy to continued growth.

Live music and entertainment is a core offering in our region, from the performers at Silver Dollar City, to the variety of stage shows offered. It is diverse – from magic to acrobatic, from musical varietal shows to amazing Biblical productions, and even a dinner attraction featuring live animals.

What do they have in common? Many are independent venues. Like Presleys', several were fortunate to receive grants from the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) program and the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) to not only keep our valuable entertainers on payroll during the height of the pandemic, but to save our small businesses while our doors were shuttered completely. Even when we reopened, capacity limits coupled with the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continued to place a strain on all of us.

We long for a return to our core focus, which is providing lifelong memories for our guests, who visit with their grandchildren, family and friends. They forget their troubles for a time, which is the reason people travel and attend concerts and comedy shows both in Branson and throughout the country. We connect, as we should, because we are all social beings. I hope this temporary isolation fades soon.

Here is the good news. Branson is resilient, and we worked as a team to find ways to welcome guests for a much needed moment of fun and laughter amidst the darkness of the pandemic. The reaction of our audiences when we reopened mid-summer of 2020 showed just how much we need live entertainment. For the first three shows, when the curtain went up on that opening song, the audience stood – for a standing ovation. It was an emotional time for us all, and our guests recognized the sacrifice and effort it took for our family and entertainers to return to the stage. I heard similar stories throughout the country, from venues coast-to-coast.

Live Entertainment is the profession we have chosen, whether as an owner, an entertainer, a lighting or sound technician, or the person who hands you your ticket stub or popcorn. This industry matters, and we are grateful to our elected leaders who have recognized this. Without your support for our industry and for the Save Our Stages Act, I may not be here before you today to tell you about the challenges we face beyond the pandemic. So, let me just make sure to say once again, thank you for this lifeline for our industry.

The economic engine that is represented by the National Independent Venue Association (NIVA) is vast and unique. While we each have our own formulas and business models, we share a common bond. NIVA has allowed us to use our voices in a meaningful way at local, state, and federal levels. We want to keep our employees; we want to contribute to our communities; we want to grow our businesses as well as businesses in our neighborhoods, and that takes resources and it takes focus.

While Branson's population is just under 12,000, our live theater and music ecosystem created a direct economic impact of 1,915 jobs, $33 million in earnings and $105 million in economic output. When including the indirect and induced economic effects, Branson's live theater and music ecosystem generated a total output of $147 million and a Value Added (GVA) of $118 million to the local economy in 2016. The total number of jobs generated and supported by the music sector in the area was 2,288. The total earnings generated totaled $44 million.

Nationally, the creative economy also has an incredible ability to drive tourism and impact local economies. According to the Travel Industry Association of America, roughly eighty percent of the more than 150 million adults who travel more than fifty miles from their homes can be considered "cultural tourists," and 56 percent of the U.S. population indicated it included at least one cultural, arts, historic or heritage activity or event while on a trip in the past year. Cultural tourists spend more and stay longer: Average spend is 60 percent more at approximately $1,319 per trip, as compared to $820 for the traditional, domestic leisure traveler. Cultural tourists take 3.6 trips vs. 3.4 trips annually.

A study in 2019 showed that for every dollar spent at a small music venue, $12 of economic activity was generated for area businesses. People come to shows at our venues in big cities and small towns across America, and they have dinner at the restaurant across the street, stay at local hotels, and patronize nearby shops. Simply put, independent music venues and the creative arts are economic engines for communities large and small nationwide.

Here is where things stand for us today. While visitors are returning, the rollercoaster ride of the COVID-19 pandemic continues. It is customary in the independent venue industry that about 5-8% of the patrons who buy tickets don't attend, and we budget accordingly. Now, venues across the country are experiencing a 20-50% no-show rate. That is a devastating statistic because most of our venues make the lion's share of our revenue through food and beverage sales. That is what we rely on to pay rent, utilities, and salaries. With consumer confidence continuing to be fragile and fewer people in the room, accurate financial planning can feel like a mirage at this moment. This, driven by the uncertainty spurred by new variants, is why we are requesting the passage of the SOS Extension Act, which would simply provide additional time to spend the emergency relief funds we have received.

We are not the only industry still grappling with consumer confidence and decreased tourism. Branson's convention center was thriving, but now large groups are making difficult decisions about when, or if, they will meet. Our area also depends on group business in the form of bus tours, church groups, student performing groups, and seniors visiting us from both coasts and from Canada.

Our current small business challenges extend beyond the pandemic. Here at Presleys' we continue to struggle with the increased cost of goods due to inflation. Just in the past month, I have received numerous notices of impending price increases from vendors – our trash hauler, our concession suppliers providing products like coffee and soft drinks, and our janitorial service. Undoubtedly, there are more notices to come.

Wage minimums are increasing this year as we face the challenge of finding employees in a competitive environment. As a small business, we must also compete with national employers who are able to adopt much higher starting wages. This is compounded by the fact that, in our region, affordable housing is difficult to find. While our Chamber of Commerce and Economic Task Forces work long hours to find individuals and families to move to our region, housing is a struggle and hampers our ability to provide the superior guest experience we strive to offer our patrons.

I share my testimony today to shine a light on the drive and vision of this industry. I have seen the ability of the creative economy to bring Americans to their feet in applause and with pure joy after the toughest time in recent history. I have seen our industry provide economic opportunities for artists and entrepreneurs, including most members of my family and community. I have seen the power of the creative economy to transform a two-lane highway into a bustling tourism destination. And this is just the very beginning of what the creative economy has the power to do.

Members of the Committee, thank you for recognizing the importance of our industry and the value our small businesses add to our local communities across America. I urge you to keep the Creative Economy top of mind as you consider policies affecting small businesses. We are eager to work as partners with you and with others in the Creative Economy to provide jobs, resources, and keep our collective economy thriving.

Thank you for your time and leadership.

Raeanne Presley

Committee on Small Business
"The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy"
Wednesday, January 19, 2022 10:00 A.M.
Questions for the Record from Rep. Troy Carter

Questions for Mr. Carson Elrod, Co-Founder Co-Organizer of the Be An #ArtsHero campaign, New York

Q: The arts are central to making any community an attractive place to live and visit. For instance, my district represents New Orleans, Louisiana, the birthplace of Jazz and home to many arts workers that make it one of the most vibrant and culturally unique places in our nation. **Can you explain how any artistic aspect of a local community can help bring people together and infuse the local economy with dollars from spending, and in turn create jobs and boost economic growth?**

A: Representative Carter, thank you so much for your questions. It's an honor to hear from you and I will endeavor to answer these questions to the best of my ability.

Your question really gets after one of the most important and exciting aspects of the Creative Economy. There is now significant research, analysis, and data to support the common-sense supposition that Arts institutions anchor dynamic local economies, stimulate small business entrepreneurship, and pump economic prosperity into communities.

You asked ***how*** the Arts can "bring people together and infuse the local economy with dollars from spending..." As our world becomes more technologically advanced and it becomes easier to default to not leaving the house, we are in danger of our communities disintegrating and economic stagnation amongst local businesses increasing. But the Arts, especially the live performing Arts, give tremendous incentives for people to come out of their homes and into the community, strengthening their sense of humanity, their psychological well-being, and injecting the local economy with dollars that sustain small businesses and local jobs. They do this by providing exciting, stimulating, beautiful, provocative, educational, ecstatic, spiritual, significant, and personally meaningful experiences that are the foundation of living a human life.

Statistically, we know that an "Arts night out" will stimulate a local economy in a number of ways. Ms. Pressley, in her testimony, noted that for every dollar spent at Pressley's Jubilee Theatre, there are $12 spent in the local Branson economy. Aside from that anecdote, data suggest that people who go out to participate in Arts events tend to spend $31.47 per person, in addition to the price of admission for the event. That $31.47 is spent on babysitters, parking, gas, in restaurants, coffee shops, bars, and the like. [SOURCE] In short, the Arts event is what gets people to get out of their homes and into the community with each other. Once they are, spending is a natural byproduct of that activity.

In your district, for example, there are 259 Arts & Culture small businesses, employing 3,603 Arts Workers, and contributing $101 Million in payroll that flows directly back to your

district's local economy. In New Orleans, Bourbon Street's numerous jazz clubs are a primary source of economic prosperity, promoting tourism, entrepreneurship, and employment.

In the United States, 81% of tourists are considered Cultural tourists, and Cultural tourists tend to spend more and stay longer than other tourists.[SOURCE] People come to New Orleans from all over the world to experience it's legendary jazz scene. When they do, they need hotels to stay in, restaurants to eat in– and that's just the day-to-day Jazz scene in New Orleans. When a dedicated Arts event, like JazzFest happens, the economic multiplier effect is felt even greater. This event, which is only 10 days long, annually attracts 400,000 visitors who generate $400 MILLION in economic impact. [SOURCE]

To follow this out to its most logical conclusion, the more we invest in Arts Workers and Arts institutions, the more collateral socio-economic benefit a community gets. That's why legislation like the PLACE Act, CREATE Act, The Creative Economy Revitalization Act, The 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act, The Arts Education for All Act, and other Congressional interventions are so important. They would, together, essentially create a perfect confluence of circumstances to center Arts Workers and the businesses they animate in order to harness their unique ability to stimulate dynamic local economies. By passing these pieces of legislation, Congress has the opportunity to revive the U.S. post-pandemic economy and jumpstart a new era of economic growth and prosperity centered around the nation's Arts Workers.

I invite you to review pages 40-45 of our House Hearing Packet for a more thorough exploration of the promise of the Creative Economy.

Q: Mr. Elrod, in your testimony you mentioned that 68% of tourism is cultural. I can attest to that, my district that includes New Orleans and Baton Rouge. You also mentioned the disparities in impact to Black and Brown organizations as a result of the pandemic and how Black and Brown communities were more likely to report that they lack the financial resources needed to return to in-person programming than white organizations. **In your opinion, what is the cultural impact of Black and Brown arts workers on this country? How do you recommend we bridge that gap and ensure that all arts workers receive the support they need?**

A: In my opinion, the cultural impact of Black and Brown Arts Workers has been, and continues to be revolutionary, wildly profitable, and globally influential. From Prince's meteorologically transcendent halftime performance at the Superbowl to Theaster Gates creation of Black community Arts spaces in Chicago to The Classical Theatre of Harlem's ecstatic storytelling to ArtFields in Lake City, South Carolina's rehabilitation of a blighted community to the visionary masterpieces of Nick Cave to the sonic mastery and pop culture monarchy of Beyonce, Black and Brown Arts Workers revolutionize Art forms, pioneer new techniques,

create jobs, start small businesses, and serve as global standard-bearers for the cutting edge of every Art form. Aside from our most famous and known Arts Workers, Black and Brown Arts Workers are also gaffers, designers, merch table managers, technicians, spotlight operators, directors, and thousands of less visible, but just as impactful jobs that are vitally important to the maintenance of our Creative Economy. In short, the cultural impact can not be overstated.

And yet, as your question suggests, it is our marginalized communities who suffer the most when an unexpected tragedy, like Covid, hits our industries. According to the Americans For the Arts Covid Impact study, BIPOC artists had higher rates of unemployment than white artists in 2020 due to the pandemic (69%vs. 60%) and lost a larger percentage of their creative income (61%vs. 56%).

Structural and systemic barriers within institutions and many industries within the Creative Economy compound a lack of access and representation for BIPOC Arts Workers. According to the NEA, "non-white Arts Workers face structural inequities within the Arts & Culture industry that erect further barriers to success. While non-white and Hispanic workers made up 32% of the overall American workforce in 2011, they made up only 13% of authors and writers, 20.7% of designers, and 17% of Fine Artists. [NEA, 2016, p. 19]"

That's why it's imperative that Congressional interventions contemplate how to concretize protections and access for BIPOC Arts Workers. It is also why it's important to keep considering expanded unemployment insurance and more Congressional attention, like a commission to further investigate the needs of this uniquely devastated set of industries and its most vulnerable members.

Fortunately, many pieces of introduced legislation include specific language to make sure that these interventions dedicate themselves to diversity, equity, and inclusion. **The Creative Economy Revitalization Act** and the **21st Century Federal Writers Project** include specific calls to commission narratives from marginalized populations. **The Arts Education for All act** would make sure every single child in the country would have access to Arts Education pre-K through 12th Grade, which would be a revolutionary intervention that would give **all** U.S. children emotional, imaginative, innovative, and creative tools to thrive personally and professionally. **The PLACE** and **CREATE Acts** would create tools, training, and grants to stimulate entrepreneurship and promote creative small business growth in communities all over the country. **The Putting Creative Workers to Work proposal** offers clearly defined language to make sure that our BIPOC Arts Workers have the access and opportunities needed to survive this pandemic and be cornerstones of a cultural comeback for the American economy.

I also think that it is important for me to use my privilege and this opportunity to "pass the mic" to an accomplished BIPOC Arts Worker whose lived experience and expertise are vital to this conversation. I reached out to Michelle Ramos, for her opinion and I would like to share it here. Ms. Ramos, in addition to serving as board chair of the Performing Arts Alliance, is the executive director of Alternate ROOTS, a cultural advocacy group composed

of 18 nonprofit arts organizations based in the Southern United States. Since its founding, the PAA remains "the premier advocate for America's professional nonprofit presenting and performing arts organizations, artists, and their publics".

Ms. Ramos wishes to add: "We know historically that Black and Brown communities across the country, but particularly those in the South, have been disinvested in for centuries by the national arts and culture sector. This impact is significant, in that many community artists, organizers, and culture bearers impart legacy, tradition, and storytelling through their artistic work and practice. They, in fact, make up the cultural fabric of many of our communities and are the safe-keepers of our legacy and past. In order for workers to receive the support they need we need to start with the acknowledgment that the system was built to disadvantage artists and culture bearers of color as a starting point. The impact of the pandemic, climate crises specific to the South, and racial targeting and profiling due to the racial uprisings have hit Black and Brown communities hardest during this unprecedented time. We bridge that gap by prioritizing these communities in the recovery efforts and righting past wrongs for years that these communities have been forgotten. Reparations and reallocations of funds is a good first step to ensure critical artistic contributions are not forever lost due to a systemically racist system **that continues to perpetuate eurocentric art forms as the only valid form of art worth funding.**

RESEARCH

Cultural impact:

- BIPOC artists had higher rates of unemployment than white artists in 2020 due to the pandemic (69%vs. 60%) and lost a larger percentage of their creative income (61%vs. 56%).

- SNAAP's 2013 survey found that Black Artists faced significant additional burdens in lack of access to important networks and people (36% compared to white Artists' 22%,) while Hispanic Artists faced high levels of debt. [SNAAP, 2013, p. 17.]

- A 2019 survey reported that 44% of dancers and choreographers were non-white or Hispanic, versus 25% of the overall Arts Workers population. [NEA, 2019, p. 12] In addition, 75% of those in the dance and choreography sector were employed in multiple jobs. [SNAAP, 2011, p. 1] With these factors in mind, it is likely that ALAANA (African, Latina/o/x, Asian, Arab, and Native American) dance workers face even greater numbers of need than were reported in the DanceNYC survey:
    - 72% of respondents need funds for housing.
    - 69% need funds for food/groceries.

- 35% need access to mental health care (as compared to 24% needing mental
- health care in Spring 2020).
- 44% have not been able to access needed medical and mental health resources.
- 21% do not have health care coverage.
- 75% have filed for unemployment since March 2020. [DanceNYC, 2021, p.10]

- Non-white Arts Workers faced structural inequities within the industry that erected further barriers to success. While non-white and Hispanic workers made up 32% of the overall American workforce in 2011, they made up only 13% of authors and writers, 20.7% of designers, and 17% of Fine Artists. [NEA, 2016, p. 19]
- In 2011, "Fifty-seven percent of current professional artists [held] at least two jobs concurrently; 18% [were] working three or more jobs." [SNAAP, 2011, p. 1]
  - In the dance and choreography sector, these numbers are much higher, with 75% employed in multiple jobs. [SNAAP, 2011, p. 1] While only 25% of Arts Workers overall are non-white or Hispanic, for dance or choreography occupations, the number rises to 44%, meaning that burdens of time, energy, and finances that accompany multiple jobs hit minority populations much harder. [NEA, 2019, p. 12]
- Louisville, KY: "IDEAS xLab is a dynamic artist-run nonprofit based in Louisville, KY - and working nationally - to champion inclusion and belonging through creativity, art, and action."
  - The (Un)Known Project is a collaboration between IDEAS xLab, the Frazier History Museum, the Metro Government, and the Black history museum in Louisville, Roots 101.
    - Roots 101 just moved to a new, 11,000-square foot location in the renovated Whiskey Row. Art collector Julia Lewis stated of the museum, "'We need a cosmopolitan culture, and that is to not just tolerate differences but to embrace multiculturalism.'" [Schipper, 2021]
  - Its name comes from the idea that so many of the names of the men and women who were trafficked at the riverside port and in the slave pen whose site holds a historic marker in the middle of downtown today, were unknown. However, Artist and IDEAS xLab Chief Creative Officer Hannah Drake reminds us that "Somebody knew them." [Wolf, 2020]
  - The project starts with a memorial located at the river's edge, with footprints cast in stone to commemorate the steps of the slaves going both ways - to slavery in the plantations and farms of Kentucky and further south, but also back to the river to pay tribute to those who escaped across the Ohio River via the Underground Railroad. Limestone benches will dot the walkway stretching between the museums (which are all located within a few blocks of each other, and located within historic buildings that still maintain their original cast iron

facades, the largest such district in the U.S. outside of Soho,) and thematic outdoor Artwork will be created especially for the project.
    - A local Louisville Artist, William M. Duffy, was chosen to design the benches: ""I believe the bench project will convey respect for and dignity to forgotten people whose stories will educate and inspire people for generations," Duffy said." [Wolf, 2021]

- In Chicago, Chandra Christmas-Rouse, program officer with Enterprise Community Partners in Chicago, is a fellow with RaD Lab + Outside the Walls, which "supports ALAANA (African, Latinx, Asian, Arab and Native American) artists and creatives who use radical imagination to practice a racially just society." [Threewalls]
    - "Chandra's work for the fellowship focuses on her neighborhood of Bronzeville and seeks to answer the question: 'What if, when we dream, our neighborhoods gave us everything we need to realize our collective visions?'" [Agantaku, 2020]
- "Black Soil celebrates black farmers in Kentucky through education on topics related to agriculture, sustainability, and urban gardening. In addition to hosting farm to table dinners with partners from throughout the state, Black Soil offers workshops for adults, adolescents, and children on various topics related to agriculture. [Co-founder Trevor Claiborn] described how he uses hip-hop to engage the community. As Farmer Brown the MC, Trevor raps to young audiences on topics like pollination and photosynthesis." [Center for Arts in Medicine, 2017: p. 17]
- The Cheyenne River Youth Project "began in 1988 when a bar was converted into a youth center. It now offers paid internships, job training, and cooking classes in Indigenous cuisine. Community meals, weekend arts and culture camps, arts fellowships, and a graffiti jam connect youth to their art and culture. The graffiti jam, which just celebrated its fifth year, consists of two days of creating murals followed by a two-day festival. Youth involved in the project are mentored by artists in the community and media partners. Graffiti jam beautifies the city by selecting empty buildings to improve through art. The project simultaneously preserves the Lakota language through its use in street art." [Liu & Rubin, 2021, p. 10]
    - CRYP "is located on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation, home to a large Lakota population in an isolated region of South Dakota. It is one of the poorest counties in the nation, with high unemployment and suicide rates and a history of forced relocation and repression. It was illegal to practice the native religion until the 20th century. However, the arts are entwined in everything to the extent that there is no word for art in the Lakota language. CRYP itself is similarly intertwined in the community, woven into the social fabric. According to [past deputy director Meghan] Tompkins: "We are a community staple. We work alongside the tribal government. They were involved from the beginning." [Liu & Rubin, 2021, p. 9]

- "Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) is a community organization advocating for and with Asians and Pacific Islanders in Oregon. They utilize storytelling and imagining and shifting narratives to highlight their members' lived experiences and connect them to issues: "APANO aims to advance a long-term cultural strategy to impact beliefs, actions and policies through centering the voices of those most impacted and silenced, resisting and shifting harmful narratives and ideas, and moving beyond defensive strategies to envisioning alternatives."" [Liu & Rubin, 2021, p. 13]
    - Specifically, "APANO's Arts & Media Project (AMP) is a group of Asian and Pacific Islander artists and creatives that use art to advance social justice." [APANO]
- The Native American Community Development Initiative (NACDI) redeveloped a light rail stop along Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis, Minnesota's Phillips neighborhood, home of a pivotal movement for Native rights in the late 1960s.
    - "[T]he community prioritized making the walk between the stop and the corridor a more pedestrian-friendly zone. Their efforts linked transit-oriented arts programming and sidewalks with interpretive markers, and boosted foot traffic from the light rail stop to the vibrant arts community, now a corridor of Native-serving shops, galleries, social services, and gathering spaces. All My Relations gallery, the first fine arts gallery in the Twin Cities featuring Native artists, serves as a cultural event hub and anchor for the district." [Rose, Daniel, & Liu, 2017, p. 19]
- Built at the crossroads of Harlem and Washington Heights, the Sugar Hill Housing Development combines "124 units of affordable housing" with the Sugar Hill Children's Museum of Art & Storytelling, where "family-friendly performance spaces host music, theater, storytelling, and oral history events that invite young families to celebrate and perform the rich cultural heritages they bring from multiple cultures and migrations." [Wolf, et al., p. 59-60]
- In 2013, the First People's Fund studied the impact of 40 years' worth of investment in Native Artists. Compared to Emerging Artists who had not yet tapped into the resources that FPF offered, FPF Artists:
    - Sold their Artwork at four times the amount: an average of $2,337 versus $587 per piece.
    - Used the internet to sell their work over 9 times as often (64% vs. 7%)
    - "[I]ncrease[d] their individual annual revenues by nearly 38 percent, from $19,575 to $26,982." [First People's Fund, 2013, p. 19, 20, 23]
    -

Recommendations:

- **Targeted funding** (w/specific specifications to serve tribal nations) Point to this study

- While cultural and social differences between groups may contribute to the last gap, it is likely that questions of safety and discrimination are in play, with 44% of Black adults reporting that they experienced discrimination while in a retail, dining, or entertainment venue in 2020. [Hamel, et al. 2020] Meanwhile, a 2019 survey found that 20% of American Hispanic adults had been criticized for speaking Spanish in public and 19% had been told to go back to their home country. [Gonzalez-Barrera & Lopez, 2020]

- **Investment** (NEA grants– but with a removal of "artistic excellence" as the qualifier for funding)
    - A 2015 survey found that 13% of Arts alumni indicated that a lack of loans or investment capital was the largest barrier to advancing their career. Black and Hispanic Artists were even more likely to indicate financial barriers to success, at 21% and 15%, respectively, pointing to long-standing systemic factors that put minority Artists at a further disadvantage. [SNAAP, 2015, p. 7]

- **Return arts & humanities funding to schools** and require curriculum hours to be spent on the arts.
    - Between 1982 and 2008, the percent of 18-year-olds who reported having received any Arts education at all had declined by 23%. [NEA, 2011]
    - "A failing school in Bradford increased their music education provision by six hours. The school improved its overall performance as a result." (Center for Music Ecosystems) "In 2011, the school was 3.2 percentage points behind the national average in English. This year [2017] 74% of its pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, against a national average of 53%. It is 7.1 points above the average for reading and 3.4 above for writing. In maths, the school was 2.4 points behind the national average in 2011 and is now 6.5 above it. Its results for disadvantaged pupils are well above average." (Halliday)
    - However, this is particularly important for BIPOC communities. However, the impact of that decline was not felt equally across all sectors. "[A]lmost the entire decline in childhood arts education between the 1982 and 2008 SPPAs was absorbed by African American and Hispanic children." [NEA, 2011]
    - "[A]ccess to arts education for African-Americans and Hispanics is significantly lower than for their White peers and has been steadily declining for three decades." [AFTA, p.23]
        - 59% of white children receive Arts education.
        - 28% of Black children do.
        - 26% of Hispanic children do.

- **Research barriers to Arts participation** and attendance.
    - Barriers to [event] attendance also varied by racial and ethnic heritage. While approximately 40% of total respondents replied that events were too difficult to get to, for Black and Mexican-American respondents, the rate rose to 60%. Both of these groups also reported an inability to find someone to go with as an obstacle at twice the overall rate (34% vs. 17%.) [NEA, 2015, p. 33-34]

1

Committee on Small Business

"The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy"

Wednesday, January 19, 2022 10:00 A.M.

Questions for the Record from Rep. Troy Carter

Question for Sandra Karas, Secretary-Treasurer, Actors' Equity Association, New York

○ You've all spoken about how arts workers and institutions anchor dynamic local economies, following that logic, would investment help other hard-hit industries like hospitality, tourism, and restaurants? Especially since arts workers often utilize these industries to help sustain their practice.

Answer: Yes, investing in the arts can strengthen small businesses in a variety of other areas. According to Americans for the Arts, prior to the pandemic, the average nonprofit live arts attendee spends $31.47 per person per show on other services like transportation and travel, parking, childcare and dining. This amounted to more than **$100 billion in spending** that is generated by the audience. Meanwhile, there is an equally strong business case for public funding of the arts. National Endowment for the Arts grants provide a significant return on investment of federal dollars with $1 of NEA direct funding leveraging **up to $9 in private and other public funds**. When the creative sectors thrive, the communities in which they function not only enjoy, but come to depend upon the steady financial support they provide.

Best regards,
Sandra

ArtPride
NEW JERSEY

Advancing a State of Creativity
ArtPrideNJ.org

Explore Your Passion
JerseyArts.com

January 18, 2022

The Honorable Andy Kim
US House of Representatives – NJ Dist. 3
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Kim:

I am writing to you as Director of Public Policy for ArtPride New Jersey, whose headquarters is in NJ District 3, regarding the House Small Business Committee Hearing on the Creative Economy on January 19, 2021. I urge the Committee and you to recognize the *Power* of Arts & Culture as an economic driver in our nation, the *Peril* of the Arts' lack of federal support, and the *Promise* that the Creative Economy offers towards revitalizing the entire American economy.

The Creative Economy consists of businesses involved in the production or distribution of the arts that range from nonprofit museums, symphonies, and theaters to for-profit film, architecture, and advertising companies. In New Jersey, there are over 19,000 arts related businesses that employ over 80,000 people[1]. According to the US Small Business Administration there are 302 arts, entertainment and recreation small businesses in New Jersey District 3 that employ over 3,600 people[2].

The tourism and hospitality industry is also prominent in District 3 and that industry along with its creative industry partners have been hit hard by the pandemic. New Jersey's creative industries lost more than $3.9 billion in revenue and nearly 75,000 jobs due to COVID[3]. According to research from the New Jersey Division of Travel and Tourism, visitation dropped 27% from 2019 to 2020 causing a spending loss of more than $17 billion[4]. Pre-pandemic levels of tourism revenue and visitation are not projected to return until 2023, or beyond.

Creative industry organizations are dealing with a variety of significant business operations issues that impede recovery from the effects of the pandemic:

- the inability to realistically budget cash flow from earned income past a three-month period;
- loss of income as a result of last minute ticket cancellations and refunds due to either illness or fear of exposure (the Omicron variant has had significant impact in this regard);
- physical plant improvements needed to help audiences feel comfortable with or without masks;
- the need to rebuild capacity in terms of human resources due to job losses;
- and the IT and staff costs needed to continue high quality digital programming

It is important for the House Small Business Committee to understand how vital the creative economy is to downtowns in District 3 and throughout the nation. In New Jersey, every arts and cultural patron spends over $33 in local economies each time they purchase a ticket for a cultural event. That translates

[1] Creative Industry Report for NJ Dist. 3, Americans for the Arts, 2017
[2] US Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy, NJ Congressional District Profiles, 2021
[3] COVID 19 and the Creative Economy in New Jersey, Americans for the Arts,
[4] The Travel Recovery: An Epic Story, Tourism Economics, Dec. 2021, presented at NJ Tourism Conference

ArtPride NEW JERSEY

Advancing a State of Creativity
ArtPrideNJ.org

Explore Your Passion
JerseyArts.com

into over $662 million dollars each year in economic impact[5], again, when cultural venues fully in operation. The benefits are clear in District 3 cities of Bordentown and Burlington (ArtPride New Jersey's offices are located in the historic Lyceum Hall Center for the Arts), as well as in the lively downtowns of Medford, Mount Holly, Toms River and Point Pleasant, among others.

To help the creative economy recover, we ask you to co-sponsor and support legislation like the CREATE Act, that was reintroduced on 1/12, sponsored by Rep. Dingall (D-MI-12) and Rep. Schatz (D-HI), and Rep. John Cornyn (R-TX) that will have far reaching benefit. The CREATE Act will provide the creative economy federal resources through the Small Business Administration that are afforded to other businesses. This act is a first step to assuring that the SBA will include the creative economy industries in future and ongoing program development.

- Expand Microloan Program qualifications to include artists and arts entrepreneurs, or small businesses, that support the creative economy;
- Provide support to State, regional, and local art agencies, artist, and creative workers through traditional economic development tools;
- Direct the Small Business Administration (SBA) to develop procedures on evaluating the business proposals and plans of non-employer business and small business concerns that focus on varying aspects with regard to the creative economy;
- Additionally task the SBA with partnering with relevant stake holders to develop a technical assistance program that targets the specific needs of artist and arts entrepreneurs; and
- Establish a demonstration program to assess the feasibility of providing planning grants support to local arts agencies and nonprofits

There are several other bills that will help the creative economy recover from the effects of the pandemic and provide relief to not only cultural businesses but their employees as well. The Creative Economy Revitalization Act (HR5019), introduced this past August, is another opportunity to cosponsor legislation that calls for $300 million for a new grant program to support the arts, in collaboration with the NEA. The grants will go to local, state, and tribal agencies, workforce investment boards, and public or private nonprofit entities that can hire local creative workers and produce publicly-available creative projects. These projects could include public artworks, festivals, performances, written works, anthologies and narrative collections from first responders and historically marginalized communities, and arts education work.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding this request for support, and thank you for listening to testimony on the Creative Economy offered before the Small Business Committee.

Sincerely,

Ann Marie Miller
Director of Advocacy & Public Policy

[5] Arts & Economic Prosperity 5 in New Jersey, Americans for the Arts, 2017

432 High Street, First Floor
Burlington, NJ 08016

voice 609.479.3377
eFax 609.964.1598

Dear Ms. Finks,

I am an artist and a writer based in Portland, Oregon, and I want to share my recent research into the effects of the pandemic on Portland's visual artist community. Last year I wrote "Seeing Visual Artists: A Portland Pandemic Report," a quantitative and qualitative report published by the Center for Art Research at the University of Oregon. The report examines the conditions of artists' lives in the first year of the pandemic, and here is a small sample of what I found:

- 86% felt that the pandemic had disrupted their artistic practice
- of those that primarily support themselves by means other than artmaking, 43% earn their living through one or more part-time jobs and/or a series of freelance gigs—the most precarious forms of employment that have been affected by the pandemic
- 19% of visual artists were furloughed or had hours reduced, and 15% were laid off or fired; 14% were currently unemployed at the time of publication
- 18% reported that housing was a serious concern in the first twelve months of the pandemic, and 8% experienced food insecurity
- 41% of respondents said that their scheduled exhibitions were canceled between March 2020 and April 2021, resulting in a loss of sales and further opportunities.

My report also considered the literature resulting from studies of the benefits that accrue to cities that attract and retain artists. In particular, the synthesis "Understanding the Value of Arts and Culture" revealed that:

- the arts attract other creative industries to a city
- arts participants volunteer more, vote more, and have more psychological resilience
- participation in the arts enhances learning, remembering, problem solving, communication skills, social competency skills, and produces a more innovative workforce—in short, the kind of skills that will mean a great deal to our social and economic recovery from the pandemic.

In a nation-wide survey entitled "Americans Speak Out About The Arts In 2018: an In-Depth Look at Perceptions and Attitudes About the Arts in America," the data shows that:

- 60% of Americans approve of arts funding by local government
- 71% believe that the arts improve the quality and livability of their communities
- 81% believe "the arts are a positive experience in a troubled world."

For these and other reasons, I urge the Congressional Committee on Small Business to support the Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA). Considering everything that the roughly 2,500,000 artists in America contribute to their communities, both directly and through the ripple effects that prove advantageous to entire cities, it is crucial that they be included in the recovery and repair efforts to this nation.

Sincerely,
Bean Gilsdorf

Seeing Visual Artists: A Portland Pandemic Report

Brian McClean is a Coast Guard veteran from Philadelphia, PA. His business, McClean Photography supports individual well-being through the use of Fine Art evidence-based themes, colors, and subjects. Each work inspires relaxation, hope, and calm. The company is a service-disabled veteran and black-owned small business that provides canvas, metal. acrylic and framed prints.

All work is shipped and comes ready to hang in offices, restaurants, hospitals, lobbies, and homes. Augmented Reality is available to preview work in any space directly from the company website for proper sizing. Proceeds from sales are donated to mental health initiatives.

Jan 19, 2022

Brian Marquis
994B Maplewood Pl
Nashville, TN 37216

Jim Cooper
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Cooper,

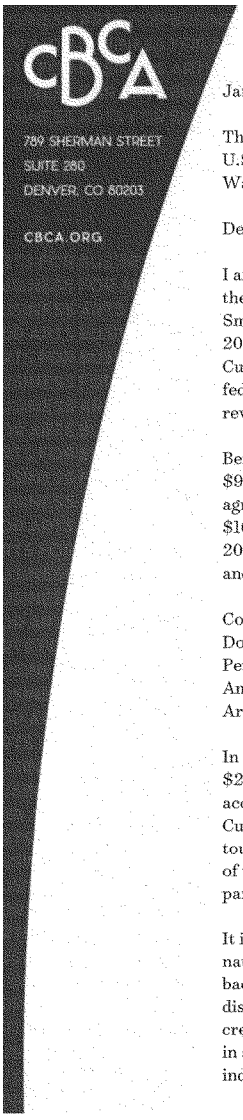
I am writing to you as a Music Tour Manager and constituent of the 5th Congressional District of Tennessee, regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

The power and promise is clear. What is also clear is the peril we are now facing. With thousands of our small businesses shuttered, 2.7 million arts and culture workers unemployed, and at least $150 billion in losses (in just a three-month period), we are facing an economic cataclysm locally and nationally. Therefore, I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector. These common-sense initiatives include tax breaks and meaningful investment which will spur job growth and innovation, bringing local jobs to your district and increasing tax revenue.

These bills include the bipartisan HR4750, the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act, which would immediately give a tax break to rank-and-file arts workers who are in immediate need of economic relief, in addition to: HR5019, the bipartisan Creative Economy Revitalization Act; HR6381, the bipartisan Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act; the Arts Education for All Act; HR1945, the Help Independent Tracks Succeed Act; HR7011, the Pandemic Risk Insurance Act; HR3054, the 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act; and HR2380, the Saving Transit Arts Resources Act. Additionally, I urge you to establish a congressional commission to further study the economic impact of the creative worker in America as well as the creation of a Department and Secretary of Arts and Culture to oversee investment in the Creative Economy. In doing so, you will improve the lives of all Americans today and for the century ahead.

Our fates are tied together.

Sincerely,
Brian Marquis



January 17, 2022

The Honorable Jason Crow
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Crow,

I am writing to you as a constituent of Colorado and Executive Director of the Colorado Business Committee for the Arts (CBCA) regarding the House Small Business Committee Hearing on the Creative Economy on January 19, 2022. I urge you and the Committee to recognize the *Power* of Arts & Culture as an economic driver in our nation, the *Peril* of the Arts' lack of federal support, and the *Promise* that the Creative Economy offers towards revitalizing the entire American economy.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Creative Economy accounted for $919.7 billion of the American economy, which is five times as much as agriculture and forestry. In Colorado, the Creative Economy contributed $16.3 billion or 4.1% to our state's economy, comprising over 108,000 jobs in 2019. That critical engine to our economy exceeds transportation, mining and agriculture in our state.

Colorado's 6th Congressional District is home to cultural assets like Downtown Aurora Visual Arts, Kim Robards Dance, The Armory Performing Arts Center, Museum of Outdoor Arts, Fiddler's Green Amphitheatre, Littleton Town Hall Arts Center, and the Aurora Cultural Arts District, which recently became a state-certified creative district.

In 2019, arts, cultural and scientific nonprofit organizations alone generated $2.3 billion in economic activity in the seven-county Denver metro area according to CBCA's recent Economic Activity Study of Metro Denver Culture. There was also record-breaking employment, attendance and tourism through the arts, which fuel significant ancillary spending. A decade of that cultural growth was lost all of the sudden due to the onset of the pandemic in 2020.

It is clear that Arts & Culture are a vital industry sector for Colorado and the nation, comprised predominantly of entrepreneurs and small businesses, the backbone of our economy. It is also clear that the Creative Economy was disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Estimated losses to the creative industries as a whole are 2.7 million jobs and more than $150 billion in sales. In Colorado, it was estimated that these essential creative industries contracted by 30% in the first few months of the pandemic alone.

The Arts are primed and ready to help America recover from the pandemic. Arts jobs have a significant multiplier effect. Not only do the creative industries create jobs and generate economic activity, these crucial small businesses provide numerous social benefits such as collective healing, educational outcomes, community cohesion, civic and cultural pride.

I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector, and create a Department and Secretary of Arts & Culture to represent this vital sector of the U.S. economy. There are seven bills right now that will leverage the power of the arts and, by doing so, uplift our economy: the **Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA),** the **CREATE Act,** the **PLACE Act,** the **Arts Education for All Act,** the **21st Century Federal Writers Project Act,** the **Saving Transit Arts Resources Act (STAR Act),** and the **Performing Arts Tax Parity Act (PATPA).**

Thank you in advance for demonstrating your commitment to improving the lives of all Americans, the vitality of American businesses, and the revitalization of the entire American economy by elevating the Power, Peril and Promise of the Creative Economy.

Sincerely,

Christin Crampton Day

Christin Crampton Day
Executive Director, Colorado Business Committee for the Arts (CBCA)

It is my understanding that this committee is interested in "recommendations for investments in key infrastructure and a roadmap for bringing arts, culture and creativity into the center of long-term recovery."

As the Executive Director of a Small Business ($800K annual budget, 3 full time employees, 300 volunteers), I am acutely aware of the need for investments in infrastructure for the arts, culture and creative communities. In particular there is a significant disconnect in the need for physical space (rehearsal, studio, performance, presentation, etc.) and available space that is cost-effective. There's also a need for additional arts allocations. Such investments pay off.

Americans for the Arts Prosperity 5 (https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/research-studies-publications/arts-economic-prosperity-5) showed: "*Nationally, the nonprofit arts and culture industry generated $166.3 billion of economic activity during 2015—$63.8 billion in spending by arts and cultural organizations and an additional $102.5 billion in event-related expenditures by their audiences. This activity supported 4.6 million jobs and generated $27.5 billion in revenue to local, state, and federal governments (a yield well beyond their collective $5 billion in arts allocations).*"

We know that small businesses are the backbone of America. That's true especially in the arts and culture field. Our creative businesses provide more than the financial ROI of grant allocations, there's the community element. At a time when the country has been isolated and mental health issues are multiplying from the effects of COVID and its variants, it's more important than ever to come together for the common good. We need places to gather, to have shared experiences. To laugh. To cry. To be inspired. That's what the creative community provides - which is far more valuable than just the dollars and cents. Without the money, however, the impact is so much less than it could be.

Boston Gay Men's Chorus

Craig Coogan | Executive Director
craig@bgmc.org | 617-542-7464 ext 305

Boston Gay Men's Chorus
539 Tremont Street | Boston, MA 02116
www.bgmc.org

The BGMC creates musical experiences that inspire change, build community and celebrate difference.

January 19th, 2022

Damon Grant
20 McClurg Ave
Apt #2
Stamford, CT 06902

The Honorable Jim Himes
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Himes,

I am writing to you as a musician, podcaster and music educator. I am also a constituent of CT-4. This letter is regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

The power and promise is clear. What is also clear is the peril we are now facing. With thousands of our small businesses shuttered, 2.7 million arts and culture workers unemployed, and at least $150 billion in losses (in just a three-month period), we are facing an economic cataclysm locally and nationally. Therefore, I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector. These common-sense initiatives include tax breaks and meaningful investment which will spur job growth and innovation, bringing local jobs to your district and increasing tax revenue.

These bills include the bipartisan **HR4750,** the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act, which would immediately give a tax break to rank-and-file arts workers who are in immediate need of economic relief, in addition to: **HR5019,** the bipartisan Creative Economy Revitalization Act; **HR6381,** the bipartisan Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act; the Arts Education for All Act; **HR1945**, the Help Independent Tracks Succeed Act; **HR7011**, the Pandemic Risk Insurance Act; **HR3054**, the 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act; and **HR2380,** the Saving Transit Arts Resources Act. Additionally, I urge you to establish a congressional commission to further study the economic impact of the creative worker in America as well as the creation of a Department and Secretary of Arts and Culture to oversee investment in the Creative Economy (the way more than 50 other countries do). In doing so, you will improve the lives of all Americans today and for the century ahead. Change STEM learning to STEAM!

Our fates are tied together.

Sincerely,
Damon Grant
Percussionist, Educator, Podcaster

Organic Arts
2609 South Delaware Ave
Milwaukee WI 53207-2301
414-702-6053
performingartsmilwaukee.com
orgarts@gmail.com

Video:
www.youtube.com/user/OrgArts

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/Organic



Presenting a Spectrum of Arts and Educational Programs

January 18, 2022

The Honorable Gwen Moore
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Moore,

I am writing toyou as a constituent of your district, Wisconsin District 4, and as the Creative Director of a local non-profit Performing Arts organization, regarding the House Small Business Committee Hearing on the Creative Economy on January 19, 2021. I urge the Committee and you to recognize the Power of Arts & Culture as an economic driver in our nation, the Peril of the Arts' lack of federal support, and the Promise that the Creative Economy offers towards revitalizing the entire American economy.

In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Creative Economy accounted for $919.7 billion of the American economy, (five times as much as agriculture and forestry.) In Wisconsin, the economic impact in 2019 was $10.9 billion, encompassing over 96,000 full time jobs - more jobs than in our state's beer, biotech, and papermaking industries.

I'm not only an arts administrator, I'm also a working performer, presenting over 100 programs a year in the area at Senior Citizen facilities, churches, libraries, for Discovery World and at community festivals. Our other participating artists also present several hundred performances in a variety of venues covering folk, blues, jazz and bluegrass music and storytelling. These folks are independent contractors who work in cooperation with our non-profit to share resources and opportunities.

Despite its contributions to Wisconsin's America's economic success, however, the Arts & Culture sector has failed to receive much needed support. Estimated losses to the creative industries as a whole from the COVID-19 pandemic are 2.7 million jobs and more than $150 billion in sales. As early as June of 2020, research showed that foot traffic had declined in consumer areas as much as 60%, only 7% of which could be attributed to government lockdowns. Theaters and other performing arts venues were the hardest hit of all establishments.

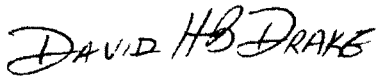
During the height of COVID, none of our performers had any gigs and the scheduled ones were canceled. This was especially hard since we do a lot of shows for Senior Communities, which were the first to close and last to re-open (and are again locking down with the latest COVID surge, again canceling shows).

Wisconsin's creative sector is primed and ready to help the state recover from the pandemic. Creative sector jobs have a significant multiplier effect; in rural areas, higher creative sector employment per capita gives an even larger boost to overall employment than in urban areas. In short, the more creative workers you have, the more jobs you have, period.

I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector, and create a Department and Secretary of Arts & Culture to represent this vital sector of the U.S. economy. In doing so, you will demonstrate your commitment to improving the lives of all Americans, the vitality of American businesses, and the revitalization of the entire American economy.

Please call on me for information and assistance in developing this important sector. Many thanks for your support.

Sincerely,



David HB Drake
Creative Director
Organic Arts Ltd.

Jan 17, 2022

Deborah Stewart
928 Home Ave.
Oak Park, IL 60304

Honorable Danny K. Davis
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Davis,

I am writing to you as a grant writer in the non-profit theater sector and constituent of the IL-7th District, regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

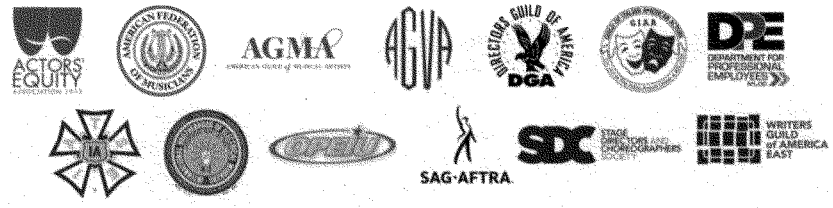
The power and promise is clear. What is also clear is the peril we are now facing. With thousands of our small businesses shuttered, 2.7 million arts and culture workers unemployed, and at least $150 billion in losses (in just a three-month period), we are facing an economic cataclysm locally and nationally. Therefore, I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector. These common-sense initiatives include tax breaks and meaningful investment which will spur job growth and innovation, bringing local jobs to your district and increasing tax revenue.

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Our fates are tied together.

Sincerely,

Deborah Stewart



February 2021

A Policy Agenda for Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in the Arts, Entertainment, and Media Industries

As unions, we hold a fundamental belief that diversity is a strength. We work inside and outside the traditional collective bargaining process to create more and better opportunities for underrepresented people. Smart policy solutions aimed at creating diverse talent pipelines, incentivizing diversity in hiring, and supporting collective bargaining will help our workplaces and our industries move forward.

Ensure That Creators Have Middle Class Careers, Not Hobbies

Creative professionals must be able to earn fair pay and benefits. Otherwise careers in the arts, entertainment, and media industries will be limited to a narrow, non-inclusive set of people - those who can afford to hold out for the promise of a future payday that may never arrive. Creative professionals must be able to enforce their workplace rights, including the right to join together in union and negotiate collectively with their employers. Through collective bargaining, people of color and women have raised their pay, narrowed the racial wage gap,[1] and established mechanisms for addressing intentional and unintentional racism in their workplaces.[2] Creative professionals also need strong copyright protections because they depend on the sale of legitimate content for their pay and benefits. Too often creative professionals of color, women, and other marginalized individuals are not able to realize the full economic value of their intellectual property, an impediment to maintaining a career that utilizes their unique talents and abilities.

Congress should:

- Pass the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act;
- Pass the Restoring Justice for Workers Act;
- Pass the Create a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair (CROWN) Act
- Pass the American Music Fairness Act; and
- Support copyright reforms aimed at combating theft of lawful content, such as reforming Section 512 of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act to restore balance between content

[1] McNicholas et al. (2020). "Why unions are good for workers - especially in a crisis like COVID-19." Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute. Available here: https://www.epi.org/publication/why-unions-are-good-for-workers-especially-in-a-crisis-like-covid-19-12-policies-that-would-boost-worker-rights-safety-and-wages/.

[2] "Toolkit: Advancing Racial Justice in the Professional Workplace" (2020). Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO. Available here: https://www.dpeaflcio.org/other-publications/toolkit-advancing-racial-justice-in-the-professional-workplace

creators and online platforms and ensure that creative professionals can earn a fair return for their work.

Increase Federal Arts Funding and Establish DEI Objectives for Grant Recipients

Through grants, seed money, and technical support, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) ensure that Americans of all means, geographies, and abilities have access to artistic and educational content. The NEA, NEH, and CPB also help bolster local economies and put creative professionals to work on nonprofit productions and performances, including members of our unions. These gigs have also provided entry points to careers in the for-profit side of our industries for many of our members through the opportunity to develop skills, experience, and professional connections. Congress can help ensure that more of these career opportunities are available to people who are underrepresented in our industries.

Congress should:

- Increase funding for the NEA, NEH, and CPB;
- Work with stakeholders, including unions, to develop diversity hiring and reporting objectives for grant recipients, such as requiring that applicants provide a three-year look-back report on recruitment, hiring, and promotion;
- Authorize funding for Chief Diversity Officer positions at the NEA, NEH, and CPB; and
- Establish an incubator grant program to help underrepresented people pursue creative projects and make connections with industry mentors.

Leverage Federal Tax Incentives to Encourage Diverse Hiring

Recognizing the boost provided to state and local economies, Congress has established tax benefits for American-based film, television, and live entertainment productions. Tax incentives are important because they create work opportunities for our members that may otherwise go abroad. We know from the state level that tax policy can also offer a "carrot" approach for our industries' employers to hire more inclusive casts and crew.

Congress should:

- Follow the lead of states like Illinois, New Jersey, and New York to identify effective diversity requirements for federal tax incentives that will spur more inclusive hiring in film, television, and live entertainment.

If you have any questions, please contact DPE Assistant to the President/Legislative Director, Michael Wasser at (202) 638-0320 ext. 11 or mwasser@dpeaflcio.org



DEPARTMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO

January 19, 2022

The Honorable Nydia M. Velázquez
Chairwoman, U.S. House Committee on Small Business
2361 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Blaine Luetkemeyer
Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee on Small Business
2069 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Velázquez and Ranking Member Luetkemeyer,

On behalf of the Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO (DPE), I wish to share our perspective on the "power, peril, and promise" of the creative economy.

By way of introduction, DPE is a coalition of 24 national unions, 12 of which are unions representing professionals working in the arts, entertainment, and media industries. DPE coordinates activities among these 12 unions, including advocating for shared policy priorities. These unions' members work in nearly every part of the creative economy - from the bright lights of Broadway to the regional theaters of the Midwest to the soundstages of Hollywood, and the big cities and small towns in between. They are actors, camera operators, cinematographers, costumers, craftspeople, choreographers, dancers, directors, editors, instrumentalists, make-up artists, musicians, performers, stagehands, variety artists, writers, singers, stage managers, and many other professions.

Union creative professionals help power the creative sector, which is responsible for more than 5 million jobs, over four percent of the United States' GDP, and a positive trade balance. In addition, the creative economy has a positive economic spillover effect for local economies. Research indicates that audiences spend an estimated $31.47 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission, on lodging, restaurants, clothing, transportation, and other goods and services. Indeed, many of these establishments benefiting from the extra audience spending are likely to be small businesses.

The members of DPE's affiliate unions in the arts, entertainment, and media industries are also proud that, through collective bargaining, they have helped create a sector where people can work in W-2 jobs that provide family-supporting pay; affordable, quality healthcare; retirement security; and safe working conditions. These standards were not won overnight or handed down

benevolently, but, rather, they were achieved through years of creative professionals coming together to earn a fair return on their work. Which is why Congress must strengthen and promote worker protections, including the right to organize and collectively bargain with employers.

While the creative sector is typically an economic powerhouse, the reality is that the COVID-19 pandemic caused economic devastation. Most creative professionals work in public venues and on job sites requiring close personal contact. Some continued to work during the pandemic. However, the majority of creative professionals were among the first to lose their jobs at the pandemic's outset, and they have been among the last to return to work. During this surge of the latest variant, an increasing number of live events have been cancelled or postponed, thereby keeping many creative professionals out of work.

The CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan were invaluable lifelines for union creative professionals, helping them to weather the worst of the pandemic. In particular, I wish to thank the House Small Business Committee for passing policies that helped union creative professionals impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Expanding the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) to labor unions impacted by the pandemic ensured that unions could keep their employees on the job providing critical member services. Throughout the pandemic, despite declining and sometimes no revenue, DPE's affiliate unions committed resources, including staff time, to ensuring that their members could navigate complex state unemployment systems, find rental and mortgage payment assistance, and have access to basic mental health services, among other support functions. DPE's affiliate unions also continued to negotiate collective bargaining agreements and work with employers on plans for members to safely return to work.

Looking forward, there are meaningful actions Congress can take to help the creative sector continue to recover from the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and resume its positive impact on the American economy.

Congress should pass H.R. 4750, the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act (PATPA). Introduced by Reps. Judy Chu (D-CA) and Vern Buchanan (R-FL), this bipartisan legislation would update the Qualified Performing Artist (QPA) deduction to correct an unintended consequence of tax reform that has caused a drastic tax increase for middle class creative professionals. QPA is a provision of the tax law that allows certain performing artists the option to take an "above the line" deduction for expenses incurred in the course of their employment. Modernizing this deduction will help low-income and middle-class creative professionals seek employment.

Congress should also pass a Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 appropriations bill that funds the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for Humanities (NEH) at $201 million each and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) at $565 million. Many union creative professionals earn their living working on nonprofit productions and in performances that receive funding from the NEA, NEH, and CPB. Through grants, seed money, and technical support, these agencies help ensure that Americans of all means, geographies, and abilities have access to artistic

and educational content. NEA, NEH, and CPB-funded programs help veterans heal from the invisible scars of war, inspire the next generation of creators and innovators, and deliver content that unites people across small towns and big cities. In addition, the nonprofit arts sector is a proving ground where people wanting to work in the commercial parts of the arts, entertainment, and media industries can establish their careers. These funding levels are also an important step toward restoring the NEA to an inflation-adjusted full funding level of $331 million, or $1 per capita.

DPE and our affiliate unions in the arts, entertainment, and media industries believe now is also the time for smart policies that can aid our ongoing pursuit of a more diverse, representative creative sector. Enclosed is our "Policy Agenda for Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Arts, Entertainment, and Media Industries," which contains policy solutions aimed at creating diverse talent pipelines, incentivizing diversity in hiring, and supporting collective bargaining that will help our workplaces and the creative industries move forward. Equity and inclusion are essential, not only as a matter of doing what is right, but also for the long-term sustainability of the creative sector, which is why we are committed to pushing the arts, entertainment, and media industries to create more and better jobs for underrepresented people.

In closing, the creative sector is a source of pride for America, both culturally and economically. Creative industries bring Americans together and put them to work in good-paying, family-supporting jobs. DPE's affiliate unions in the arts, entertainment, and media industries are proud of their members' contributions to the sector's success. I again thank the Committee for holding this important hearing, and urge its members to recognize that policies supporting creative professionals benefit the sector and the economy as a whole.

If you have any questions, please contact DPE Assistant to the President/Legislative Director, Michael Wasser, at mwasser@dpeaflcio.org.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Dorning, President

Attachment: Policy Agenda for Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Arts, Entertainment, and Media Industries

Hi Lauren,

I am a professional playwright in New York City, though I now write for television due to the insecurity of the theater industry as a result of the pandemic.

I'm writing to urge Congress to take seriously the need for governmental support to the American theater -- both as a recovery measure, and as a permanent, sustaining factor of any thriving creative economy.

The theater industry has long struggled to retain professionals like me due to its nearly impossible economics. Most theaters in America operate as nonprofits, with 10% of income coming from ticket sales and almost all the rest from private donations.

This creates innumerable problems. Many are felt by artistic administrators, who must operate cultural institutions while navigating the interests and politics of the wealthy few individuals who supply most of their budget. Many more of these problems land on people like me -- arts workers, who want to do our jobs for a living wage.

Theaters, strapped for cash and with few places to look for it given the lack of government funding, create lean budgets that rely on artists accepting depressed wages. Most of us go into this business knowing we'll be scraping by, at least for a time. The sad reality is that even the most successful artists in my industry are usually impoverished -- because professional success, in theater, does not come with professional compensation.

I have worked in theater for ten years as a playwright. I have seen my work produced. I have won awards and honors. In 2020, I won a coveted fellowship position at an off-Broadway theater, Page 73. It is considered one of the highest achievements for an early-career writer in America. Think of this fellowship as a full-time, one-year, career-making position awarded to one writer out of about five hundred applicants nation-wide. This fellowship paid me $10,000. It was the most money I had ever made from a single employer in theater.

This is wrong, but it is typical, because **without government support, theaters cannot pay professional wages, and so artistic professionals sacrifice our lives.** We forgo having children, we do not go to the doctor, we cannot afford stable housing, we work a million side gigs and day jobs, we accept underpaid theater work again and again and again, piecing it together in the hopes that eventually we'll see success and a comfortable life. But in the theater, when success comes, it usually pays very little -- because there is simply not enough cash to go around. Our industry is broken, and we need policy to fix it.

America doesn't have to run its cultural industries this way. We have ample models of thriving arts economies around the world. What they have in common is government support and a societal agreement that **art is a public good and not a commodity.** It should be funded by the public -- and not by a small class of wealthy individual donors, who cannot fit the bill of a country-wide cultural economy. Art should be funded by the government.

We need sizable, permanent funding for the arts -- to recover from Covid, and to sustain artistic working professionals, who have for far too long accepted poverty wages because we love what we do.

We also need healthcare -- which most of us cannot afford, because our wages are so low.

Thank you for turning your policy minds to our industry. We are your electorate. We are your neighbors. We tell the stories you rely on to survive your life. We need you to protect our ability to do our vital work. Fund our industry. Protect our health.

Sincerely,
Emma Goidel
2020 Page 73 Playwriting Fellow
emmagoidel.com / thekilroys.org

January 24, 2022

Emmi S. Herman
11 Edgemere Drive
Searingtown, NY 11507

U.S House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Suozzi,
I am writing to you as a freelance writer and constituent of NY Congressional District 3 regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" which took place on January 19, 2022.

America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local businesses. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

The power and promise is clear. What is also clear is the peril we are now facing. With thousands of our small businesses shuttered, 2.7 million arts and culture workers unemployed, and at least $150 billion in losses (in just a three-month period), we are facing an economic cataclysm locally and nationally. **Therefore, I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector.** These common-sense initiatives include tax breaks and meaningful investment which will spur job growth and innovation, bringing local jobs to your district and increasing tax revenue.

These bills include the bipartisan **HR4750,** the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act, which would immediately give a tax break to rank-and-file arts workers who are in immediate need of economic relief, in addition to: **HR5019,** the bipartisan Creative Economy Revitalization Act; **HR6381,** the bipartisan Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act; the Arts Education for All Act; **HR1945**, the Help Independent Tracks Succeed Act; **HR7011**, the Pandemic Risk Insurance Act; **HR3054**, the 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act; and **HR2380,** the Saving Transit Arts Resources Act.

Additionally, I urge you to establish a congressional commission to further study the economic impact of the creative worker in America as well as the creation of a Department and Secretary of Arts and Culture to oversee investment in the Creative Economy. In doing so, you will improve the lives of all Americans today and for the century ahead. Our fates are tied together.
Sincerely,
Emmi S Herman

My name is Gabe Long, I live in Rhode Island's 2nd congressional district, and my business exists because of government funding. In 2016 my wife and I left New York City for Providence, RI, ready for a fresh start and a more affordable city where we could start a family. Our plan was to take what we had been doing in New York, making video, and bring it to our new home. We figured we'd find our way when we arrived. We strarted out doing videos for free and cheap with the extremely bare-bones equipment we owned (none of our early clients had the budget for us to rent gear), we networked, and we hustled.

Three years later we'd made progress, but we were a long way from creating a viable, family-supporting business. That's when we heard about the DESIGNxRI program, funded by federal community block grants. In 2019 we applied and we're accepted and a new chapter of our career began.

The program gave us the funds to purchase equipment that transformed the quality of our work and provided us with mentorship and guidance that gave us the direction we needed to take our business to the next level. In 2018 we made $35,000, in 2021 we made $80,000. We are now in a position where we hire crew for shoots, mentor younger filmmakers, and participate in the economy of our city in a meaningful way.

Our story is unique among arts workers. Providence is eligible for community block grants only because it meets a specific set of economic criteria, and the DESIGNxRI program exists only because the city of Providence has a particular focus on the arts as a key part of the economy. But this unique story is an example of what could happen for arts workers across the country with more investment in this sector of the economy. People like us are everywhere, people with the skills and drive to become entrepreneurs but without the funding and support necessary to take the first steps toward building a successful business. If our story is an indication of anything, it's that an investment in the arts can yield spectacular returns.

To put an immediate economic floor under the creative economy now and in the long term, we urge you to pass all existing creative economy policy, including
HR4750, bipartisan Performing Artist Tax Parity Act (PATPA)
HR6381 - bipartisan Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act (CREATE)
HR5019 - bipartisan Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA)
HR5581 - Arts Education For All Act (AEFA)
HR1945 - Help Independent Tracks Succeed Act (HITS)
HR7011 - Pandemic Risk Insurance Act (PRIA)
HR3054 - 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act (21CFWPA)
HR2380 - Saving Transit Arts Resources Act (STAR)
HRxxxx - Promoting Local Arts and Creative Economy Workforce Act (PLACE).

Thank you,
Gabe Long

Dear Congressional Committee on Small Business,

It exits your nose and mouth, forming a kind of cloud around you, and the people next to you end up sharing your breath, just as you share theirs.

This simple act of imagining respiration is beyond many Americans today. The proof? They refuse to wear masks when there's a pandemic of an airborne virus that spreads asymptomatically. The fix? Arts funding.

When you do everything you can to ensure that American artists earn a living wage, you are actually funding solutions for the crises of COVID, global warming, and many other issues, because art nurtures the single most underdeveloped natural resource in the US of A: imagination.

With a better imagination, it would be easier to picture the earth's oceans free of trash vortices, easier to choose products with less packaging, and easier to put pressure on corporations to stop killing our planet.

With a better imagination, women, nonbinary folx, and men would be less likely to let the unimaginative among us dictate the terms, and everyone would be able to conceive of a world in which erectile dysfunction pills aren't the Pentagon of health funding—or indeed where the Pentagon isn't the Pentagon of funding!

With a better imagination, we wouldn't have to have personal experience with racism, ableism, homophobia, or fatphobia in order to admit that these problems exist. We'd know how to care for each other.

Art nurtures imagination. When you fund art, you send a clear message to those who work tirelessly to squash imagination's power that you value the ability to see what isn't right in front of you.

Fund the best future we can imagine! Fund art.

Sincerely,
Gwenn Seemel

Jan 15, 2022
Hattie Schapiro
637 Baltic Street, Brooklyn NY 11217

Nydia M. Velázquez
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Nydia M. Velázquez,

I am writing to you as a visual artist and constituent of NY-7 regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

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Our fates are tied together.

Sincerely,
Hattie Schapiro

Hello!
I am writing as a co-founder of a local art nonprofit, Pedal Press. We offer art education and event-based live screen printing, as well as affordable small-run printing for our community.

More than ever before, in these uncertain times our young people must be supported in developing a strong and durable relationship to their own creativity. Problem-solving is a constant in creative work--and especially screen printing, which is a complex process that takes practice to master. I would argue that learning to generate ideas, solutions, and plans is BEST supported by artmaking, and the creative process generally.

We need to trust our imagination and practice how to build it out in the real world. Beset as we are by multiple social, economic, and environmental catastrophes, it has never been more important to have the practical ability to envision and create prototypes for new systems; ones that can realistically replace the dysfunctional and crumbling systems we currently exist in.

Creative thinking is a skill that builds on itself, and is reinforced with every creative act, no matter how unlike these acts may seem on the surface. It's time to "put our money where our mouths are"--if we value the practice of creativity, it's time to fund it like we mean it.

As an Art teacher, I see that everyone wants to *praise* art until it's time to *fund* art; I see that students are taken out of my class for counseling or other purposes preferentially because my class is an "elective," and somehow non-essential.

OUR CREATIVE WORK IS ESSENTIAL. It is no less than a tangible expression of who we are. We must return to our human roots as creators, to move our society forward into a sustainable, equitable, and joyous place.

Thank you,

J. Murphy
Education/Outreach/Service
530.520.3110

Jan 17, 2022

Jacob Harvey
6436 Neddy Ave
West Hills, CA 91307

Congressman Brad Sherman
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Sherman,

I am writing to you as an Artistic Director and constituent of District 30, regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

The power and promise is clear. What is also clear is the peril we are now facing. With thousands of our small businesses shuttered, 2.7 million arts and culture workers unemployed, and at least $150 billion in losses (in just a three-month period), we are facing an economic cataclysm locally and nationally. Therefore, I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector. These common-sense initiatives include tax breaks and meaningful investment which will spur job growth and innovation, bringing local jobs to your district and increasing tax revenue.

These bills include the bipartisan HR4750, the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act, which would immediately give a tax break to rank-and-file arts workers who are in immediate need of economic relief, in addition to: HR5019, the bipartisan Creative Economy Revitalization Act; HR6381, the bipartisan Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act; the Arts Education for All Act; HR1945, the Help Independent Tracks Succeed Act; HR7011, the Pandemic Risk Insurance Act; HR3054, the 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act; and HR2380, the Saving Transit Arts Resources Act. Additionally, I urge you to establish a congressional commission to further study the economic impact of the creative worker in America as well as the creation of a Department and Secretary of Arts and Culture to oversee investment in the Creative Economy. In doing so, you will improve the lives of all Americans today and for the century ahead.

Our fates are tied together.

Sincerely,

Jacob Harvey

I'm writing to share our story. I represent St. Louis ArtWorks, a program that "enriches the lives of youth by providing art education, essential job skill training and exposure to career opportunities through paid apprenticeships". Our program impacts the St. Louis region positively through the direct hiring of youth ages 14 - 19, that are underserved and provides them with access and opportunity that they would otherwise not receive. We are a year-round program that educates and provides a creative outlet and a place of safety for young people throughout the region.

St. Louis ArtWorks is in its 26th year of service and our public art can be seen throughout the entire area. Unfortunately, we've been hit hard by a lack of financial resources, not only for our programs but more importantly, for our general operating funds. Most granting organizations don't seem to understand that in order for us to provide our services, we must have funding for rent, utilities, salaries, and other hard costs. Our program has directly served over 3,600 youth and it is our desire to remain in operation to employ and serve more. We also provide art therapy for our youth that have been unfairly impacted over the last two years, we are looking for resources that will help us to sustain our operations for the long term.

Recently, we asked our youth what St. Louis ArtWorks means to them and they expressed the following, they talked about how much this space feels like family and how much our staff care for them, and one of our students, from Afghanistan, expressed how connected she now feels to the community because of her experience at St. Louis ArtWorks and she wanted other students to know how special and unique this program is even when comparing it internationally.

I'd welcome the opportunity to share more of our story with whoever will listen and it is certainly my hope that you will take into consideration sustainable funding for our small non-profit organization that is truly making a difference.

Thank you, Jackie

Jacqueline K. Dace

Executive Director

St. Louis ArtWorks

5959 Delmar Boulevard, St. Louis, MO 63112

Janet Mullet
5048 N Tripp Avenue
Chicago IL 60630

January 18, 2022

Rep. Mike Quigley
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Quigley,

I am writing to you as the Managing Director of Northlight Theatre and as a constituent of the 5th District of Illinois regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

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Our fates are tied together.

Sincerely,

Janet Mullet

Jan 24, 2022

James Dunn
1167 Bedford Ave
Brooklyn, NY 11216

Hakeem S. Jeffries
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Jeffries,

I am writing to you as an actor/director/teacher and constituent of New York District 8, regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "*The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy*" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

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Sincerely,
Jay Dunn



My name is Jayeesha Dutta, a 44 year old South Asian self-employed artist and entrepreneur. I have been working largely in the arts and culture sector for over 15 years now and can personally attest to the difficulty in maintaining a stable income amidst completely destabilizing times. However, we know, now more than ever, we need the forces of social cohesion, joy, and healing that artists bring to communities and it's critical the government support us to provide this type of 'critical social infrastructure' that is not often recognized or supported until it's gone.

During this time when so many theaters, live music venues, small art galleries, museums, concerts, exhibitions, shows - in other words - the types of gatherings that are the lifeblood of arts and culture have been suffering and shutting their doors, it is really important for legislation like CERA to be passed and specifically focus on bolstering the cultural economy - for the betterment of all.

Peace,
Jayeesha Dutta
resident of New Orleans, LA and Port St. Lucie, FL

Subject: The Po, Black, Latino Walt Disney no one ever heard of....

The Homeless Broken man who opened a CREAMY ARTS SHOPPE

In my relentless pursuit to succeed, someone asked me, "what's the biggest challenge you're currently having?" I have to admit, it was the first time I have ever been asked that question by anyone, much less a lender or lending institution. They only ask how much you earn and how much you have, important questions no doubt, however as Cubans say, it's like putting the cart in Front of the donkey, "Ponen la carreta delante del burro". My point is it showed unusual interest in Me as a human being and showed unusual character. Even though the results turned out the same, it was refreshing to hear humanity and concern first in a business situation, which I thanked them for sincerely.

To answer that question, I had to let them know exactly how I got here in my brutally honest way. I told them I spent 10 months of 2020 doing everything humanly possible trying to save my growing home improvement business in Miami selling impact Windows and doors, a business I had opened 5 years earlier, doubled sales, acquired a U.S. Trademark and was looking to grow regionally with a focus on franchising it by creating the IMPACTCAFE.

I started the business after losing a great job working with people I love dearly doing the same for a big box retailer. Unfortunately for me, once again I discovered that even in the greatest companies, envy and bad people exist and institutional systemic processes are in control, but that's a whole other story...

After 10 months of zero assistance or zero support, No PPP, No EIDL, No unemployment, Nothing! I felt I was just Not part of the "we're in this together" promise. I reached out to a local Miami politician with an emotional expressive letter asking solely for help for my business, Instead she sent heavily armed police to my business to strike fear and intimidate me, needlessly, exposing me to harm at my age, mid pandemic, simply to not help! (Video on my YouTube channel) Regardless .... The politician LOST :) Karma.

Sadly something had to give and it was my health. 2020 ended in a severe Hemorrhagic Hypertensive stroke that nearly ended me. When I got to Baptist Hospital in Miami my BP was something like 220/210. Somehow I walked away. A few days after getting out of the hospital I had to vacate my Miami warehouse where I had built my business, art gallery, work studio as well as a full custom loft apartment upstairs that I lived in. I was now homeless at this devastated time.

The only person to offer me help was an old friend from younger days, he drove down to Miami, "Commando missioned" me and my belongings up to Ocala to an abandoned RV bus on a property he had in the woods to at least not be on the streets. This "Bus" was in the woods of Ocala for a couple years, anyone who knows Florida knows how nature takes over abandoned things.

I then had a second stroke, only the second day in Ocala. This one took a lot out of me physically, but the only thing I could say I was truly sure of was that God was not done with me.

Relentless, I worked on my health. I cleaned the RV, the property and a few weeks after the change in administration out of a hunch and sheer desperation, I submitted the exact same paperwork that had been denied and ignored 6 times previously, was approved for a small PPP forgivable loan within 3 days of sending the application. It was not much, but enough to restore hope after being devastated.

On pure faith, blood, sweat and lots of tears I continued to work on my health and move creatively forward, I started painting horses while in Ocala out of reflex, (www.EquineArtistry.art)

I put everything into opening this new beginning. (www.CreamyArts.com) I hoped to continue to rise in strength and health to grow this amazing concept of a Creamy Arts Shoppe, featuring amazing local art and artists alongside amazingly delicious creamy Ice cream delights and healthy treat options that grows into a community's destination for many years to come. However, it became very clear that I would have to shut down sadly weeks after opening. Every obstacle has taken its toll on me, but that's not the problem, ironically the Shoppe was coming off its best weekend, however too little to make an immediate difference.

Worst of all obstacles was an unconscionable experience at the hands of PayPal who decided to without reason, cause, fact or sanity to tie up $5000 dollars of my money deposited into my business account for no reason other than my long Latino name and my minority partners long middle-eastern name were seen as a "Risk"! What risk? It's not their money to asses risk on! He works in fraud prevention for banking institutions and I am an award winning artist and business owner. Racial profiling was the only explanation and since I exposed and unloaded on them immediately they had to fully release the funds, however more than 4 weeks went by, preventing the 180 days they wanted to hold my money, but the damage was lethal to the business. It's a SCAM simply to earn interest on our money along with who knows how many other hundreds they pull the same scam on. DO NOT USE PAYPAL ☠☠☠☠ We are currently working on a joint lawsuit against PayPal.

However, the damage was done and the main reason I had to close this beautiful Shoppe. Their act of racial profiling, cost over a month of expenses, PLUS everything went up 12-25% while they maliciously held the funds I needed to do the final upgrades required by the Health department to open the restaurant. They delayed the opening of the Shoppe more than a month causing everything to cost three times as much and more than I could overcome.

Truth is I am out of money and I alone am not enough, not anymore.

I can no longer do many things, stand or walk much, they also discovered I have onset Parkinson's, a 75% blocked carotid artery, I live with a constant pain in my left side that I try to ignore. I can never do home improvement again and doubt anyone would employ me again.

However, I can still think in spurts, paint, create art when able, but mostly I wish to inspire hope and continue to help all I can.

While homeless in Ocala, I donated over 20 Baseball original paintings to the Boys and Girls clubs in Silver Springs after seeing on the news that they had been robbed. (Please see video on my YouTube channel) (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQ5f3tXjgaj3EeVK75yGJPQ)

The Creamy Arts Shoppe combines two things I LOVE, Ice Cream and Art. www.CreamyArts.com

Staying open was an entirely different challenge that I could not overcome simply because the systemic banking and funding organizations and people making decisions go by systematic ingrained practices that are by design to keep people like me in poverty. No matter what anyone says, Traditional banking, lenders and the entire concept that drives the credit and banking industries comes out of a racist seed that has long entrenched "traditions" in making success mostly unattainable if not impossible to attain

without perfection or their rare blessings where taking their big cuts comes first of course, I will NEVER get Any funding are access.

America's biggest challenge is overcoming generations of racially motivated and entrenched NO's towards minority businesses Regardless of how hard we work or how remarkable some of the things we do are, unless you are a perfect individual, the traditional systematic machine is NOT designed for people like me to succeed. PERIOD! It Never was!

Please pardon my brutal honesty and if not "scurred" please share my story of relentless resolve or of someone just being too old stubborn and stupid to give up on his dreams of doing good and creating magical worlds of art and entertainment despite being a broken homeless old man. I sleep on the floor in the back of my shop at least for a couple more weeks. I have so many more details to this story and believe it or not I am not an angry or unhappy person, I just understand. My happiness comes from the people I connect with, those I share my art, experiences and love for creation with :)

In reality....All I really want to do is paint and create opportunities for artist and creators. Some of us never get to see our dreams grow up. :)

Please share freely, if you know any information on organizations or programs to help minorities and start up arts business or just help individuals destroyed by Life or Covid, with or without infection or that may help broken individuals achieve success or can help fill the many gaps my health, age, finances and added hardships coming ahead I will face, will be sincerely appreciated. :) At the very least, I hope this helps at least one person connect with my relentlessly doing everything I can to not be homeless. I've done all I can, I proved that with God, ANYTHING is possible. Ironically the location I took over was previously a church.

https://youtu.be/9slTK7oeZMk

I completely understand how busy you guys are and mostly how utterly insignificant I am, if you ignore my message and do not read it or reply, it's OK, sadly, I have gotten accustomed to getting ignored and minimized my entire life, it is nothing new.

THIS is MY real life and someone has a REAL WORLD opportunity to make a direct impact in someone's life whose business will surely benefit an entire communities and help bring this magical franchise to fruition. I hope you've read this far, God bless you for doing so. You have an open invitation to come visit me at the Creamy Arts Shoppe, come to the Shoppe hopefully when I re-open.

At this point, I've Proven to anyone and everyone that America is still the land of opportunity and anyone who says people are lazy and don't want to pull themselves up, are full of it! I've proved them wrong.

Also, sadly as I expected, I am also LIVING PROOF of how the racially motivated systematic machines, their regulations and processes that EVERY business requires to succeed, the opportunities to build financial growth and stability, basic foundation every business needs are NOT designed or Ever intended for people who look like me.

I will always have the "credit background" and "History" of a poor, Black Latino Man who is now also OLD and SICK. The First thing they always see. The most common excuse I hear is "We're just not the right fit for your business" ... (Code for you are Poor, Black and Latino) lol

I have reached out to pretty much everyone I can think of and then some, including local and national media outlets to try and garner support from the community but despite overcoming 2 severe strokes and losing everything I had worked for due to the pandemic, shutdowns and being left out of the "were in this together" promise, ending up homeless, I continued forward, continued to fight to build this amazing beautiful Shoppe and Art gallery dedicated to promoting and showcasing local artists within the communities we service and NO ONE CARES! Even this, few if anyone will share it, no one will help, most will NEVER try to read it.

There is just ZERO support for people like me; I don't know what else I can do. I just turned 62, in constant pain... maybe it's time to finally give up??.. just go paint somewhere? :) It's God's Plan.

My story just proves and highlights facts that show there are still HUGE issues in equality and access to build our dreams. Add my age and health, I know the odds are almost impossible, but it does not mean I'll stop fighting and trying to open eyes if anything simply because I am too stupid, stubborn and old to give up if anything so tomorrows creative entrepreneur's deserve better, and GET BETTER!

Ironically, this entire business came to exist simply because of how difficult renting anything to live is and how ridiculously expensive it has become. You are giving your money to someone else to enrich them and they make it hard on YOU!

Inherently, asking for money and getting money given to me by traditional lenders just won't happen. It makes me think of a great Thomas Edison quote that says "Vision without execution is Hallucination".

Truth is I need help with the execution so this great vision of nationwide Shoppes and animated cartoon series set in a magical place called Creamyville, where the honorable Mayor Wafer Cookieton guides guest ton new flavor treats while meeting new friends like Yankee Turtle Dandy, ALL in a place where interesting flavors, creations and amazing works of art come together some say only located in the Magical domain of CreamyArts.com, I hope it does not end up just another of my Hallucinations.

It's fun to dream....but it's more fun to succeed! Not all of us can be as perfect as we'd like, and sadly way too many never even get the opportunity dream.

I hope you share my story freely hopefully it inspires hope in someone that needs it. Despite losing everything, ending up homeless, surviving 2 severe strokes at age 62 and yet not giving up, might actually be insane? What do you think?

At the very least, I can say I proved to Everyone and Anyone who doubts if America is Still the land of opportunity and if you put everything into a dream, IT IS POSSIBLE to make it happen through hard work and sacrifice. I am Proof!

However, small dreams and big dreams are very different beasts and getting there and maximizing a big vision to its full potential for Black, Latino and minority Visionaries and "dreamer" entrepreneurs, seeing that Vision become reality, sadly, too many of us never get to see it live, at all much less see that vision evolve to grow into a beautiful Shoppe. A space that grows into a community of local artist, makers

connected thru warm neighborhood level Shoppes that are a must see place a "living" constantly evolving creative space building a long and bountiful fruition of creative content to fill volumes of warehouses.

I alone have created several thousands of drawings, writings, books, paintings digital art, sketch books, sitcom and movie ideas, that will probably never be seen. How many creatives can we bring up to become part of the Creamy Arts Shoppe in their communities when opened? It's a beautiful symbiotic dream relationship of flavors and culinary treats merged with creative artistic visions, a Shoppe for all the senses, each taking on its own culture, style and reflection of that area.

Wow! It's even big for me😎

In closing, when I was just a small boy, I was always saying stuff and drawing my dreams of places or buildings or ideas and characters and things that were seemingly way beyond my grasps. One day, out of the blue, one of my older cousins turns to me and says "you know what your problem is kid.... YOU don't know how to think small. He never said or did anything positive or helpful for me ever again, however he also was absolutely correct.

All my dreams and ideas are way beyond my capacity and deep down I know it, but boy is it fun to dream of magical places, especially ones that could rival a Sponge Bob in global reach with the right juice behind it. I'll never run out of ideas and will continue as long as God decides. Juice on the other hand, I know the trees are much too high for me to ever reach...

..... Born to a Single working class mother many years ago, my Afro Cuban roots have been both a blessing and a curse. I've lived a lifetime of surviving by relying on my talents, creating limited success despite my many issues, hardships, bad people, circumstance, envy, great pain, being minimized, hated and ignored by some simply for being a poor, Black, Latino, Walt Disney as someone recently said to me.

I am one who has always been looking for the opportunity to have fun creating my visions of designing, empowering through art even protesting, creative energy has been my fuel since childhood. My true friends I count on my fingers not on FB they are of every background imaginable .

After devastations of 2020 and Hope of 2021.... I am now fully FREE, ready to begin to do nothing or release over 40 years of creative content before it's lost to forever. Some of it will be liked, some will be hated, some will outright Piss people off, if it does, then it's doing it's job and exactly what art is supposed to do.

All my content, doodles, writings, books, sketches characters are all real and inspired out of my real life, most of the content lies in wait, never seen. So fair warning 😎

My "Shoppe" business model though closing after only one month, passed its month long Beta test with flying colors. No funding, No marketing, out of a bad location, in a bad area, pandemic still keeping people away, it did what it was supposed to do, attract talent and bring in good people for great products.

The business model is solid, now I need to find the right people to maximize and implement it full throttle in the right place, with the right JUICE!.. :)... or Do nothing and enjoy retirement with my grandkids..😎

Please understand I am the real deal, American Born, loud CUBAN Roots undeniably a Type A, Alpha, PROUD SOB!.. Relentless and kind, if that alone is not contrast enough.

This post is an attempt to use the universe to attract true influencers, Product development pros, Sharks, creative development experts and/or Talent empowering management mavens who know how to build brand recognition and franchise this model designed to grow nationwide and want to empower someone who looks like me.. Additional business details available upon request.

- Are you a force in your own right?

- Could you live with yourself if you ignored this message?

- What if THE original Walt Disney had placed a similar ad? Would you have replied?, or lived 50 years regretting not answering that ad and at least hearing him out.

My favorite Thomas Edison quote : "Vision without execution is Hallucination."

www.JorgeDelaraStudios.com • www.BaseballArtistry.com • www.CreamyArts.com • www.SouthFloridaIsART.com • www.Wallmen.com • www.AthleteArtistry.com • www.EquineArtistry.art •

#business #marketing #job #opportunity #development #talent #content #creative #energy #art #management #funding #success #brand #arts #baseball #creating

January 18, 2022

Mr. Joshua T. Bennett
678 Hart Street, Apt. 2A
Brooklyn, NY 11221

The Honorable Nydia M. Velázquez
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Velázquez,

I am writing to you as a film/tv executive and constituent of 7th Congressional District of New York, regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

The power and promise is clear. What is also clear is the peril we are now facing. With thousands of our small businesses shuttered, 2.7 million arts and culture workers unemployed, and at least $150 billion in losses (in just a three month period), we are facing an economic cataclysm locally and nationally. Therefore, I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector. These common sense initiatives include tax breaks and meaningful investment which will spur job growth and innovation, bringing local jobs to your district and increasing tax revenue.

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Our fates are tied together.

Sincerely,
Joshua T. Bennett

Jan 14, 2022

Kate Robin
!2404 Rochedale Lane
Los Angeles, CA 90049

Ted Lieu
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Lieu,

First of all, I want to tell you how much I appreciate your commitment to progressive values! Every time I have wanted action on an issue, I knew you would already be fighting that fight, whether it be climate change, combating hate, promoting Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, public transportation, and much more. I am very proud to have elected you as my representative and thrilled by your passion and dedication to making not just our district, but the nation, better.

I am writing today as a Playwright and Screenwriter and constituent of **California's 33rd district** regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

The power and promise is clear. What is also clear is the peril we are now facing. With thousands of our small businesses shuttered, 2.7 million arts and culture workers unemployed, and at least $150 billion in losses (in just a three month period), we are facing an economic cataclysm locally and nationally. Therefore, I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector. These common sense initiatives include tax breaks and meaningful investment which will spur job growth and innovation, bringing local jobs to your district and increasing tax revenue.

These bills include the bipartisan **HR4750,** the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act, which would immediately give a tax break to rank-and-file arts workers who are in immediate need of economic relief, in addition to: **HR5019,** the bipartisan Creative Economy Revitalization Act; **HR6381,** the bipartisan Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act; the Arts Education for All Act; **HR1945**, the Help Independent Tracks Succeed Act; **HR7011**, the Pandemic Risk Insurance Act; **HR3054**, the 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act; **HR2380,** the Saving Transit Arts Resources Act. Additionally, I urge you to establish a congressional commission to further study the economic impact of the creative worker in America as well as the creation of a Department and Secretary of Arts and Culture to oversee investment in the Creative Economy. In doing so, you will improve the lives of all Americans today and for the century ahead.

Our fates are tied together. The arts express and cultivate our deepest humanity. Please bring your vast intelligence, deep soul and huge heart, to this mission!

Sincerely,
Kate Robin



U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Small Business
"The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" Hearing

Testimony for the Record submitted by:
Kerri Wood Einertson
National Director
Government Affairs & Public Policy

Wednesday, January 19, 2022

Kerri Wood Einertson, National Director, Government Affairs & Public Policy • (855) 724-2387
SCREEN ACTORS GUILD - AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TELEVISION AND RADIO ARTISTS
5757 Wilshire Blvd., 7th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90036-3600
Associated Actors & Artistes of America / AFL-CIO

Chairwoman Velazquez, Ranking Member Luetkemeyer, and members of the Committee thank you for allowing the inclusion of this testimony for the record on behalf of the 160,000 actors, announcers, broadcast journalists, dancers, DJs, news writers, news editors, program hosts, puppeteers, recording artists, singers, stunt performers, voiceover artists and other media professionals who belong to the Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA). SAG-AFTRA members are the faces and voices that entertain and inform America and the world.

We applaud the House Committee on Small Business holding this hearing to discuss the on-going risks COVID-19 has placed on the creative economy. Our piece of the creative industry employs people in every state. The industry pays over $181 billion in wages to 2.5 million people. We purchase $49 billion per year in goods and services from more than 280,000 businesses across the country and account for 16.3 billion in exports. Our industry itself is comprised of more than 93,000 business, 87 percent of which are small business employing fewer than 10 people.

To demonstrate the COVID-19 impact on one large component of our industry, for the calendar year 2020, U.S.-based production on 153 feature films was halted and not resumed; moved outside the U.S.; or moved to 2021 for production outside the U.S. This resulted in the loss of an estimated 13,442 full-time jobs directly related to film production and another 40,519 full time jobs for the various vendors that service the film industry, with lost earnings of more than $6.44 billion, and overall loss of business revenue exceeding $9.4 billion. This film production would have generated over $1.3 billion in income and sales taxes at the federal and state levels.

In addition, 216 feature films changed their project status and still have no fixed date or location for active production. These films would have created an estimated 18,977 full-time jobs directly related to film production and another 57,203 full time jobs for the various vendors that service the film industry and generated more than $9.10 Billion in earnings and business revenue of $13.27 billion. Nearly $1.9 billion in income and sales tax revenue at state and federal levels has been lost or deferred indefinitely. Reinstating Section 181 through 2025 was a step toward encouraging film and television production to remain in the United States and we look forward to continue working with our industry colleagues on production-related issues.

Whether it is bringing people together to be entertained, educating, or inspiring the next generation to create, our community is woven into the fabric of everyday life. During this pandemic, citizens throughout the world have turned to films, television shows, radio, and other creative outlets to stay connected. The SAG-AFTRA Foundation's award-winning children's literacy website, Storyline Online®, featuring celebrated actors reading children's books alongside creatively produced illustrations has also been a proud service to families. Our members have adjusted in extraordinary ways to still produce and work during this pandemic but for many months paychecks stopped because of halted production.

Kerri Wood Einertson, National Director, Government Affairs & Public Policy • (855) 724-2387
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We are grateful for the various COVID-19 related bipartisan relief packages passed by Congress to address issues facing Americans. The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC), and Mixed Earner Pandemic Unemployment Assistance programs were key safety-nets for many of our members while COVID-19 stopped work. The COBRA extensions and Affordable Care Act credit expansions in addition provided an essential layer of security during the global health pandemic. These federal programs were lifesavers for our members.

Our industry quickly came together (unions and employers) developing one of the best, comprehensive, safe return to work agreements. We aligned on testing requirements, vaccination protocols, personal protective equipment (PPE) use, COVID-19 training courses, adjustments to provided meals and transportation, production interaction, and even live audiences. Guidance and protocols were developed and updated when need to address auditions, pre-production, production, voice-over studio work, stunt performers, hair, makeup, wardrobe/costume, and props. Our industry is a success story with one of the lowest virus transmission rates on sets.

Our success at preventing COVID-19 transmission as some work has been able to resume inevitably came with higher production costs. We joined with the Motion Picture Association, the Directors Guild of America, the Independent Film & Television Alliance, and the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees to send recommendations to Congressional Leadership as well as the House Committee on Ways and Means and Senate Committee on Finance on June 29, 2020. We appreciate the opportunity to share these policies recommendations with this committee.

Update the tax deduction for performing artists' work-related expenses

The tax code currently permits qualifying performing artists to deduct unreimbursed employee expenses if they make $16,000 or less a year in income. Notably, this critical deduction ensures that performing artists in the motion picture and live theater industries are not paying duplicative income taxes on agent or manager commissions. However, this provision (established in 1986) has never been updated to reflect the modern-day incomes of low-income and middle-class performing artists. We ask Congress to pass Congresswoman Judy Chu and Congressman Vern Buchanan's bipartisan Performing Artist Tax Parity Act (HR 4750), which will raise the maximum income cap to $100,000 for individual filers and $200,000 for joint filers.

Provide federal insurance program to cover pandemic-related losses.

The ability of our industry to return to active production, whether on set or on location, is severely compromised by the inability to purchase insurance to cover losses stemming from communicable diseases amongst cast, crew, and others involved in the production. This insurance has been available in the past and is essential to the decisions by banks and others to risk investment in a film or program that may be shut down while a single member of the cast recovers from illness or because of civil authority order unrelated to the specific production. Without it, production – especially independent production – cannot resume on a significant level. We urge Congress to develop a program of federal insurance (or guarantee to fill this gap) to cover pandemic-related business losses in the future.

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Provide an incentive to hire workers.
We believe a hiring incentive modeled on the employee retention credit or the work opportunity tax credit (WOTC) will help move workers off unemployment and bring them back into the workforce. The employee retention credit enacted as part of the CARES Act and the long standing WOTC provide models that can be revised to accomplish this goal. For example, after Hurricane Katrina, Congress temporarily expanded WOTC eligible groups to include a "Hurricane Katrina employee."

Alternatively, a new targeted group could be added to WOTC for anyone who was a qualified COVID-19 unemployment recipient. In either case, to encourage a return to normalcy and efficiency, the credit should be available for employers who rehire workers who had previously worked for them.

Enhanced expensing of production costs.
While we applaud Section 181 reinstatement through 2025, Section 168(k) bonus depreciation also provides liquidity to film and television investment. The bonus depreciation deduction is permitted only upon the film or television production being placed in service (i.e., the first commercial exhibition of the film or program), rather than as production costs are incurred. The full expensing allowance for bonus depreciation is currently set to phase out by 20% per calendar year for property placed in service in taxable years beginning in 2023, so it is completely phased out by the end of 2027.

Both section 181 and bonus depreciation provisions restrict eligibility only to the first 44 episodes of a television series. We recommend either of the following two changes to the expensing provisions to help provide much needed liquidity and encourage domestic film and television production, investment, and job growth, as the industry recovers from COVID-19 related losses:

Option #1: Expand Section 181 by change the cap to be the greater of $15 million or 50% of overall production costs and eliminate the 44-episode limit.

Option #2: Modify Application of Bonus Depreciation to Films. Allow film and television production costs to be deducted as incurred (like under section 181), eliminate the 44-episode limit for television production, and allow application to acquisition of "used" films (similar to the treatment of other industries under bonus depreciation).

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts before you today. While you are hearing from two witnesses who are also SAG-AFTRA members, we are available to the committee as a resource as it explores ways to reinvigorate the creative economy.

Kerri Wood Einertson, National Director, Government Affairs & Public Policy • (855) 724-2387
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5757 Wilshire Blvd., 7th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90036-3600
Associated Actors & Artistes of America / AFL-CIO

Jan 17, 2022
Lilly Kephart
107 N Pine Ave
Arlington Heights, IL 60004
Representative Janet Schakowsky
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
Dear Representative Schakowsky,
I am writing to you as a constituent of Illinois-9th district regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.
The power and promise is clear. What is also clear is the peril we are now facing. With thousands of our small businesses shuttered, 2.7 million arts and culture workers unemployed, and at least $150 billion in losses (in just a three-month period), we are facing an economic cataclysm locally and nationally. Therefore, I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector. These common-sense initiatives include tax breaks and meaningful investment which will spur job growth and innovation, bringing local jobs to your district and increasing tax revenue.
These bills include the bipartisan **HR4750,** the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act, which would immediately give a tax break to rank-and-file arts workers who are in immediate need of economic relief, in addition to: **HR5019,** the bipartisan Creative Economy Revitalization Act; **HR6381,** the bipartisan Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act; the Arts Education for All Act; **HR1945**, the Help Independent Tracks Succeed Act; **HR7011**, the Pandemic Risk Insurance Act; **HR3054**, the 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act; and **HR2380,** the Saving Transit Arts Resources Act. Additionally, I urge you to establish a congressional commission to further study the economic impact of the creative worker in America as well as the creation of a Department and Secretary of Arts and Culture to oversee investment in the Creative Economy. In doing so, you will improve the lives of all Americans today and for the century ahead.
Our fates are tied together.
Sincerely,
Lilly Kephart

National Council for the
Traditional Arts
8757 Georgia Avenue, Suite 450
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 565-0654
www.ncta-usa.org

January 20, 2022

The Honorable Jamie Raskin
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Raskin:

I am writing to you as the Executive Director of the national folk and traditional arts agency that resides in your district, Maryland-008, the National Council for the Traditional Arts, the nation's oldest folk arts organization and the only one committed to producing live performances throughout the country. My outreach is regarding the House Small Business Committee Hearing on the Creative Economy on January 19, 2021. I urge the Committee and you to recognize the *Power* of Arts & Culture as an economic driver in our nation, the *Peril* of the Arts' lack of federal support, and the *Promise* that the Creative Economy offers towards revitalizing the entire American economy.

In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Creative Economy accounted for $919.7 billion of the American economy, (five times as much as agriculture and forestry.) In Maryland, the economic impact in 2019 was $11.7 billion, encompassing over 79,000 full time jobs - significantly more jobs than in our state's utilities, agriculture and forestry, and mining industries combined. The economic impact of the arts and culture in Maryland is more than the transportation, utilities, and education services industries.

NCTA is dedicated to the presentation and documentation of folk and traditional arts in the United States. Founded in 1933, it is the nation's oldest folk arts organization and the only one committed to producing live performances throughout the country. Its programs celebrate and honor deeply rooted cultural expressions - music, dance, crafts, rituals, foodways and stories passed on through time in families, communities, tribal, ethnic, regional, religious and occupational groups. Stressing excellence and authenticity, NCTA presents the nation's finest artists in festivals, tours, cultural exchanges, workshops, demonstrations and exhibitions, media productions, school programs and other activities. It works in partnership with communities across America to establish new, sustainable traditional arts events that deliver lasting social, cultural and economic benefits. As the Executive Director of NCTA, I am proud to continue to champion the interests of folk and traditional artists and organizations in the arena of public policy and to ensure the long-term sustainability of this industry and its people.

Last year in MD alone, NCTA helped bring $19.8M to local economic impact through the 80th National Folk Festival currently presented in Maryland. NCTA has supported employment opportunities for more than 500 artists and crew between the onset of the pandemic through

December 2021. In addition, programming engaged nearly one-million members combined from in-person and virtual programs. The economic impact of NCTA's work is invaluable.

Throughout the pandemic, NCTA has remained focused on the sustainability of the country's folk and traditional artists. This does not come without a cost to our organization and staff. NCTA employs nine full-time, salaried employees year-round and an additional seven part-time, year-round staff. For each festival, dozens of contract skilled employees are hired to provide sound engineering and stage support needed for the large-scale, complex events. In addition, artists are financially compensated for their time and sharing of traditions through performance and exhibitions.

The NCTA has had to re-imagined the presentation of festivals and programming in order to ensure the safety of staff, artists and practitioners. Despite reduced programming caused from the cancellation of live performances in 2020 and 2021, NCTA has stretched - financially - to continue paying stage crew, artists and consultants to financially support their livelihood.

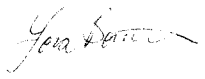
Despite its contributions to America's economic success, however, the Arts & Culture sector has failed to receive much needed support. Estimated losses to the creative industries as a whole from the COVID-19 pandemic are 2.7 million jobs and more than $150 billion in sales. As early as June of 2020, research showed that foot traffic had declined in consumer areas as much as 60%, only 7% of which could be attributed to government lockdowns. Live and performing arts venues performing arts venues were the hardest hit of all establishments. COVID-19 has impacted NCTA, and its partnering artists through cancelled festivals, programs and performances in Maryland and across the country. Cancelled programming results in artists needing to leave their traditions in order to financially support themselves and their families.

Maryland's creative sector is primed and ready to help the state recover from the pandemic. Creative sector jobs have a significant multiplier effect; in rural areas, higher creative sector employment per capita gives an even larger boost to overall employment than in urban areas. ***In short, the more creative workers you have, the more jobs you have, period.***

I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector, and create a Department and Secretary of Arts & Culture to represent this vital sector of the U.S. economy. In doing so, you will demonstrate your commitment to improving the lives of all Americans, the vitality of American businesses, and the revitalization of the entire American economy.

Please call on me for information and assistance in developing this important sector. Many thanks for your support.

Sincerely,



Lora Bottinelli
Executive Director
National Council for the Traditional Arts

January 20, 2022

Mara Jill Herman
23-37 33rd Road
Astoria, NY 11106

Carolyn B. Maloney
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Carolyn,

I am writing toyou as an **Actor/Arts Educator** and constituent of **New York-12,** regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" that took place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

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Our fates are tied together.

Sincerely, Mara Jill Herman

Jan 17, 2022

Rachael Viscidy
427 S 20th St
Philadelphia, PA 19146

Representative Dwight Evans
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear **Representative Dwight Evans,**

I am writing to you as a Program Officer for Economic Development at LISC Philadelphia and constituent of **PA-3rd District,** regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

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Our fates are tied together.

Sincerely,
Rachael Viscidy

Statement of
on behalf of San Francisco Mayor London N. Breed, Chicago Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney
before the
Committee on Small Business
for the record of the hearing on
"The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy"
January 19, 2022

We are grateful to the Committee for this opportunity to provide testimony on the topic of the creative economy. This is a critical moment of resilience and recovery as the national continues to experience the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic has laid bare the dire economic conditions facing artists, arts workers, and our arts and cultural organizations, whose creative efforts allow our communities to survive and thrive economically, culturally, and emotionally.

Urgent and coordinated action is needed to integrate arts, culture, and the creative economy into our national recovery and revitalization efforts; ensuring much needed relief for artists, who are drivers of wellbeing in their communities and essential arts and culture organizational partners.

Contributing more than $877.8 billion to the nation's economy in 2017, the arts and culture sector is an economic engine that directly employs more than 5 million workers nationwide. The current losses sustained by nonprofitarts organizations throughout the nation as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic have reached a staggering $18 billion. Our arts and cultural communities have long led the way in addressing social isolation and public health, providing direct, holistic benefits to all—from elders to youth, and for members of our society who have been undervalued by our economy and are more at risk of harm now than they have ever been. Without swift action, we may permanently lose essential arts and cultural organizational partners that are critical to our national identity and essential to accelerate our regional recovery efforts.

As our nation moves forward, we have a singular opportunity to integrate arts, culture, and the creative economy into our national recovery; recognizing the great value of purposefully integrating artists and arts organizations into community health, wellbeing, and development; and bringing deeper understanding to the catalytic value of artists and the arts in developing stronger, more equitable, and more whole communities. Emerging cross-sector initiatives across the country confirm the incalculable benefits of recognizing the arts as inseparable from land-use, transportation, economic development, education, housing, infrastructure, health, climate change, justice and equity, and public safety strategies.

The hardest year for the creative economy is ahead as access to federal aid and protections disappear. Keeping critical federal support open through 2022 ensures the arts have resources to aid in the recovery and rebuilding of our communities. As this committee, Congress and the Administration formulate ongoing infrastructure support and recovery policy, greater relief is needed for the recovery of our art and cultural workers and communities.

Weurge members of this Committee, Congress and the Administration to provide increased COVID-19 relief and recovery support for the arts and culture sector. Specifically, we urge immediate action on legislative relief that:

- Maximizes the capacity of the Small Business Administration to support the creative sector. This Committee can act by authorizing the SBA to administer all remaining funds available through the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program and extending the timeframe for grants to be used by recipients. Support for the creative sector through programs of the Small Business Administration can be expanded by enacting provisions in the Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs to Transform the Economy Act (H.R. 6381), introduced and referred to the Committee on January 12, 2022.

- Identifies opportunities for artists and arts organizations to be supported by federal programs for infrastructure, education, job creation, and health, coordinating with the Departments of Education, Commerce, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, Labor, Agriculture, Energy, Justice, Environmental Protection Agency, and State; the National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, Institute for Museum and Library Services, and other cultural agencies; local and state government partners; and tribal governments.

- Reinstates and extends the Employee Retention Tax Credit beyond 2021 and modifies nonprofit eligibility beyond the current gross receipts test to reflect the increased costs charitable organizations experience as they struggle to maintain or expand services to meet local needs throughout the health and economic crisis.

- Invests in reopening the creative economy to enable innovation and supports dedicated relief resources for nonprofit organizations and their workforce, as proposed in the WORK Now Act (S. 740 / H.R.1987) and emerging legislation that will support the creative workforce, such as the recently introduced Creative Economy Revitalization Act (H.R. 5019).

- Supports the nonprofit arts infrastructure and increases charitable giving by expanding the above-the-line, universal charitable deduction tax incentive through significantly increasing the cap and extending the provision at least through 2022 (S. 618 / HR.1704 /H.R. 1081), and supports fair tax policy for individual performers by reinstating deductions for unreimbursed employee business expenses through the Qualified Performing Artist Tax Deduction Act (H.R.4750) and the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act of 2021 (S.2872).

- Enacts policies that will ensure rapid processing of the artist visas and consular appointments that are essential to supporting international cultural activity.

- Creates positions within the Executive branch and inter-agency coordination to support the arts, culture, and creative economy, with particular attention to relief and recovery efforts.

Further, we helped lead a resolution passed by the United States Conference of Mayors urging Congress to increase support for Arts and Cultural Institutions in our Nation's Rebuilding and Recovery, which we respectfully submit with this testimony.

The pandemic has shown us how essential human connection is. We now have the opportunity to bring the full power of the creative sector to help develop and deploy policy that advances an equitable recovery, nurtures our collective wellbeing, and cultivates a better tomorrow.

Thank you again for all that you are doing, and for your support in lifting up the work, health, and wellbeing of our art and cultural communities.

January 20th, 2022
Sarah Schulz
223 8th Ave. S
Moorhead, MN 56560
Michelle Fischbach
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
Dear Michelle Fischbach,

I am writing to you as a musician, performer, and creative from Minnesota regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" which took place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.
The power and promise are clear. What is also clear is the peril me and my fellow creatives are now facing. With thousands of our small businesses shuttered, 2.7 million arts and culture workers unemployed, and at least $150 billion in losses (in just a three-month period), we are facing an economic cataclysm locally and nationally. It is hurting the success of the people I know and love. They joined this business, like so many before them, to make change and share meaningful stories that can set the tone for a better future. The Arts & Culture Workers are the storytellers who provide narratives for change. They show us what the world *could* be like, and therefore, what it *will* be like.

I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector. These common-sense initiatives include tax breaks and meaningful investment which will spur job growth and innovation, bringing local jobs to your district and increasing tax revenue. And you can say you supported the catalyst for positive change in our country and our world. These bills include the bipartisan **HR4750,** the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act, which would immediately give a tax break to rank-and-file arts workers who are in immediate need of economic relief, in addition to: **HR5019,** the bipartisan Creative Economy Revitalization Act; **HR6381,** the bipartisan Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act; the Arts Education for All Act; **HR1945**, the Help Independent Tracks Succeed Act; **HR7011**, the Pandemic Risk Insurance Act; **HR3054**, the 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act; and **HR2380,** the Saving Transit Arts Resources Act. Additionally, I urge you to establish a congressional commission to further study the economic impact of the creative worker in America as well as the creation of a Department and Secretary of Arts and Culture to oversee investment in the Creative Economy. In doing so, you will improve the lives of all Americans today and for the century ahead.
Thank you for taking the time to read this and consider the initiatives listed above.
Sincerely,
Sarah Schulz

Almost 40 years ago, a brilliant New York dramaturge and educator, Marti Stevens of Cornville, Maine, wanted to raise awareness about limited literacy and illiteracy of adults in Maine. She partnered with the Maine Department of Education, Adult Education program, to spread the word through a unique and powerful interactive improvisational model for social action theater. School districts throughout Maine and the US experienced illiteracy and limited literacy via the interactive improvisational theater (IIT) model. New troupes of IIT actors across the Nation helped audiences to understand at the gut, cerebral and heart levels how critical topics affected our neighbors and communities.

Today, her dream lives on even though the pandemic has slowed it down considerably. The troupe continues to create and learn how to navigate the pandemic and to promote the IIT model about a broad array of socially-relevant topics, such as domestic violence, the immigrant experience, challenges for senior citizens and many more.

In order to keep MSIIT and its effective professional development and training model alive, financial help is essential.

January 15, 2022

Vella Lovell
2915 Swan Place
Los Angeles, CA 90026

Reps. Adam Schiff and Jimmy Gomez
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Schiff and Mr. Gomez,

I am writing to you as a working actor and constituent of Los Angeles, CA, regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

The power and promise is clear. What is also clear is the peril we are now facing. With thousands of our small businesses shuttered, 2.7 million arts and culture workers unemployed, and at least $150 billion in losses (in just a three-month period), we are facing an economic cataclysm locally and nationally. Therefore, I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector. These common-sense initiatives include tax breaks and meaningful investment which will spur job growth and innovation, bringing local jobs to your district and increasing tax revenue.

These bills include the bipartisan **HR4750,** the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act, which would immediately give a tax break to rank-and-file arts workers who are in immediate need of economic relief, in addition to: **HR5019,** the bipartisan Creative Economy Revitalization Act; **HR6381,** the bipartisan Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act; the Arts Education for All Act; **HR1945**, the Help Independent Tracks Succeed Act; **HR7011**, the Pandemic Risk Insurance Act; **HR3054**, the 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act; and **HR2380,** the Saving Transit Arts Resources Act. Additionally, I urge you to establish a congressional commission to further study the economic impact of the creative worker in America as well as the creation of a Department and Secretary of Arts and Culture to oversee investment in the Creative Economy. In doing so, you will improve the lives of all Americans today and for the century ahead.

On a personal note–I have found that there is a collective tendency in our country to see the arts as "fluffy" or "superfluous." A frivolous past-time or hobby that the "regular people" of America will occasionally dabble in to take their mind off of their lives, or to have a fun night of culture. There is a tendency to see arts workers as that same superfluous fluff. But we are not fluff. We are people. Just like someone who works in an airline. Just like someone who works in the government. We are hard workers. We often work such long hours that our salary works out

to be far below minimum wage. We have families. We have medical needs. We are members of society. Just because our product is art, which I believe to be a necessity of all humans, and not food or flights, please do not treat us differently than other hard working Americans.
Our fates are tied together.

Sincerely,
Vella Lovell

Jan 18, 2022

William Baxter
306 n Bonnie Brae St
Los Angeles, CA 90026

Jimmy Gomez
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear **Jimmy,**

I am writing to you as a writer and constituent of CA-34, regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

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Our fates are tied together.

Sincerely,
William

Jan 18, 2022

Winnie Holzman
4420 N Clybourn Ave
Burbank CA, 91505

Brad Sherman
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Sherman,

I am writing to you as a writer and constituent of CA-30, regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

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Our fates are tied together.

Sincerely,
Winnie Holzman

February 3rd, 2022

The (Honorable ?) Scott Fitzgerald

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Fitzgerald:

I am writing to you as a constituent of your district, WI 5, as a visual artist, as an educator, and as a mother to a singer songwriter artist, regarding the House Small Business Committee Hearing on the Creative Economy held on January 19, 2022. I urge the Committee and you to recognize the Power of Arts & Culture as an economic driver in our nation, the Peril of the Arts' lack of federal support, and the Promise that the Creative Economy offers towards revitalizing the entire American economy.

In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Creative Economy accounted for $919.7 billion of the American economy, (five times as much as agriculture and forestry.) In Wisconsin, the economic impact in 2019 was $10.9 billion, encompassing over 96,000 full time jobs - more jobs than in our state's beer, biotech, and papermaking industries.

Rep. Fitzgerald, you are on a committee concerned with education. The arts are an effective inroad to whole brained learning. They are essential for a deeper learning of mathematics, reading, science, and history. Learning to create teaches observation skills, listening, problem solving, communication skill building, empathy, self soothing, and community building.

I am a painter trained in various mediums. I was also certified to teach art K-12 in Illinois at the same time as I earned my Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1988. Since then I have traveled, and lived in different cities and states, learning, creating , showing and selling art . I became a Wisconsin voting citizen in 1999 . I have been an active part of the Oconomowoc community and live next to the home of the annual tourist attraction, Oconomowoc Festival of the Arts, Fowler Park. Not quite as big as Milwaukee's Lakefront Art Festival at the MAM, or Madison's famous Art Fair on the Square, but well known and large for our smaller but ever growing small town. I have seen how murals can lively up a place, spark interest, conversation, bring peace and hope. Most recently, I participated in the design and manifestation of our local Hiawatha Train tunnel mural project, painted by all the students of OASD's 5 elementary schools this past fall, now enjoyed by everyone who uses that walkway/bike path under the train tracks near our library. We had proposed to the city years before and they were hesitant to fund the project for fear of graffiti! Well, our mural is now protected by more than the special anti graffiti weather coating our art teachers lovingly brushed on, it is

protected by all the loving pride and appreciation of the work accomplished by the students themselves and their families! It is a beautiful scene. Art creates joy- Incentive for living and working!

I am a member of Milwaukee Artists Resource Network and Pewaukee Area Arts Council and give of my time, talents and money to enrich our communities with art opportunities for critical thinking, conversation, reflective sensual living. We ALL work very hard!

Despite its contributions to Wisconsin's America's economic success, however, the Arts & Culture sector has failed to receive much needed support. Estimated losses to the creative industries as a whole from the COVID-19 pandemic are 2.7 million jobs and more than $150 billion in sales. As early as June of 2020, research showed that foot traffic had declined in consumer areas as much as 60%, only 7% of which could be attributed to government lockdowns. Theaters and other performing arts venues were the hardest hit of all establishments. I feel like so many others outside of the arts working field, take for granted that just because we enjoy our work, and that it sparks joy, it is somehow nonessential and that we should be happy to be paid for our gifts... a plumber gets paid for his/her time and talent. It is time for the true value of the arts and for our educators to be recognized. My daughter is a talented songwriter/ singer/musician who has published 9 songs but can't make enough money to pay her bills without the opportunity to perform and sell her music at live events. COVID19 prevented her from any live in person concerts. Spotify and iTunes and other streaming platforms pay fractions of a penny per play.

Wisconsin's creative sector is primed and ready to help the state recover from the pandemic. Creative sector jobs have a significant multiplier effect; in rural areas, higher creative sector employment per capita gives an even larger boost to overall employment than in urban areas. In short, the more creative workers you have, the more jobs you have, period.

I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector, and create a Department and Secretary of Arts & Culture to represent this vital sector of the U.S. economy. CERA, the CREATE act and the ARTS EDUCATION FOR ALL act are ALL IMPORTANT for the health and wealth of our state! In doing so, you will demonstrate your commitment to improving the lives of all Americans, the vitality of American businesses, and the revitalization of the entire American economy.

Please call on me for information and assistance in developing this important sector. Many thanks for your support.

Sincerely,

Abigail Engstrand

Hello,

I am an artist doing work in Tucson, AZ. I cannot overstate the impact that a grant program like CERA could have on the artist economy in the US. It is difficult to make a living as an artist. Even more difficult when you do not have the means to pursue art full time. It often means juggling different jobs, saying yes to every opportunity, working for less than you should be paid, and competing with other artists. Because funding to do public art is hard to come by, with only two agencies in AZ routinely providing opportunities, funding like CERA could expand what is offered and open the playing field for more artists to have a chance at working on a public art project.

I also sit on my local Public Art and Community Design panel that approves and oversees our city's 1% for the arts program. I cannot say how much this measly 1% makes an impact on our community. It produces a few large scale public art calls a year in which we allow applicants from all over to apply. In Tucson we have a rich collection of public art that is enjoyed by our community because of this program. Money from CERA could support much more work and even support studio artists.

Money from CERA would be so impactful in supporting artists. I am also involved in selling locally at markets and in stores. In Tucson alone, us small business owners/artisans contribute to our local economies and thrive on support from our community. CERA would help artists like me who juggle running a small business with a public art career.

Please please push this through! The artistic community is just ready to bloom.

Sincerely,
-Alex! Jimenez

Feb 1, 2022
77 2nd Ave Apt 1B
New York NY 10003

The Honorable
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Carolyn Maloney:

I am writing to you as a constituent of your district, (district 2), and as a performing artist/writer thinking about the House Small Business Committee Hearing on the Creative Economy that happened on January 19, 2021. I urge the Committee and you to recognize the *Power* of Arts & Culture as an economic driver in our nation, the *Peril* of the Arts' lack of federal support, and the *Promise* that the Creative Economy offers towards revitalizing the entire American economy.

In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Creative Economy accounted for $919.7 billion of the American economy, (five times as much as agriculture and forestry.) as a performer in downtown venues in my own small way I support the restaurants in the area as well as adding cultural value to the area. People who come to my shows go out to dinner near where I perform and I myself go out after and before shows I see.

The little performances of Off Off Broadway theatre create a culture that improves the neighborhood. Remember Jonathan Larson started here in the East Village and his show Rent went to Broadway. You take away the culture; the non-commercial edgy theatre you will have less interesting theatre at the top of the food chain; Broadway! Downtown theatre is a stepping stone a "feeder" for more commercial venues. It's where so many artists get their start.

Despite its contributions to America's economic success, however, the Arts & Culture sector has failed to receive much needed support. Estimated losses to the creative industries as a whole from the COVID-19 pandemic are 2.7 million jobs and more than $150 billion in sales. As early as June of 2020, research showed that foot traffic had declined in consumer areas as much as 60%, only 7% of which could be attributed to government lockdowns. Theaters and other performing arts venues were the hardest hit of all establishments, but our state government voted to lift the lockdown and end COVID-related unemployment benefits.

Not only do I create a service on a shoestring but I employ other artists and performers and so do my artist peers! **You can't cut off the roots and expect innovators to flourish!** YOU need to support future Jonathon Larson's so they can get their foot in the door and spread their wings.

The Arts are primed and ready to help America recover from the pandemic. Arts jobs have a significant multiplier effect; in rural areas, higher Arts employment per capita gives an even larger boost to overall employment than in urban areas. In short, the more Arts workers you have, the more jobs you have, period.

Don't you dare forget about the creative think tank of small theatres they are like schools for artists of all kinds!
People are making art because they have to!

You would not close down schools for scientists and expect innovation - would you? IT'S THE SAME THING!

I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector, and create a Department and Secretary of Arts & Culture to represent this vital sector of the U.S. economy. **Make it easy AS possible, to make things financially feasible for artists to perform outside this summer. LET's get THIS PARTY STARTED DAMN IT!** In doing so, you will demonstrate your commitment to improving the lives of all Americans, the vitality of American businesses, and the revitalization of the entire American economy.

Sincerely,

Alice Klugherz aka wonderland/wizehart
Docu-Whimsey Performance artist

Dear Ms. Finks,

I am writing to you and Mr. Esapillat regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" which took place on January 19, 2022.

America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local businesses. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

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Additionally, I urge you to establish a congressional commission to further study the economic impact of the creative worker in America as well as the creation of a Department and Secretary of Arts and Culture to oversee investment in the Creative Economy. In doing so, you will improve the lives of all Americans today and for the century ahead.
Our fates are tied together.
Sincerely,

Amanda Andrews



General Nolen Bivens (U.S. Army Ret.), President and CEO
Americans for the Arts
Statement to the U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Small Business
Hearing on The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy
February 3, 2022

Chairwoman Velázquez, Ranking Member Leutkemeyer, members of the Small Business Committee, thank you for holding a hearing to consider the vital role of the arts in our economy. In partnership with the nation's 4,500 local arts agencies, 56 state arts agencies, 5.2 million creative workers and the state arts alliances that advocate for them, Americans for the Arts is proud to submit this statement and as part of our efforts to advance sound federal creative economy policy in Congress.

The creative economy encompasses multiple business structures, from nonprofit to commercial, large corporations to small businesses and non-employer businesses, often challenging the creation of federal policy that supports and stimulates its contributions to the national economy. Arts and culture workers are not only artists, but also designers, technicians, security staff, art handlers, event planners, administrators, therapists, educators, and entrepreneurs. There are between 5.2 million and 8.8 million jobs in the creative economy. Additionally, creative occupations across industry types employ 7.6 million people, and arts workers are more than three times as likely as the general workforce to be self-employed.

The creative economy is anchored by non-employer businesses (entrepreneurs) which are 75% of all businesses and include a high percentage of women- and minority-owned businesses as well as the vast majority of independent artists. Serving these businesses is a matter of equity and advancing the overall economy.

Numerous economic studies have identified the importance and impact of the creative economy on the nation's overall economy. A pre-COVID-19 annual Bureau of Economic Analysis study demonstrated that arts and culture production contributed $919.7 billion to the U.S. economy (4.3% of GDP). The *Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account* (ACPSA) is the only federal study to provide in-depth analysis of the creative sector's contributions to the economy.

Additional sector studies include the Americans for the Arts' *Arts and Economic Prosperity Study* and *Creative Industries* reports, as well as more recent studies on the impact of COVID-19 on the creative economy, such as *Lost Art: Measuring COVID-19's devastating impact on America's creative economy* from the Brookings Institute.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on America's arts sector. While employment conditions improve for artists and creative workers, the arts are recovering slower than other industries and COVID continues to disrupt in-person programming.

This is a summary of research by Americans for the Arts and others on the human and financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the arts.

1. Artist Employment is Recovering, But Slower Than the Nation's Economy

- "Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation" jobs dropped from 2.5 million to 1.2 million between February and April 2020 (-53%). As of **December 2021**, arts jobs have rebounded to 2.24 million. Positive news, but still down (-11%) since pre-pandemic (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).

- Johns Hopkins University reports that, as of **December 2021**, the percentage of job losses at *nonprofit* arts organizations remains more than 3 times worse than the average of all nonprofits (-12.5% vs. -3.7%).

- The U.S. Census Bureau's Small Business Pulse Survey reports that "arts, entertainment, and recreation" businesses are among the most likely to take longer than 6 months to recover from the pandemic.

2. Rebound in Arts Attendance

- 63% of arts attendees are already attending in-person programs as of **December 2021**—up from 38% in September and 17% in April 2021—with 37% expecting to do so in January 2022 or beyond. (AMS Audience Outlook Monitor)

3. The Pandemic's Impact on Nonprofit Arts & Culture Organizations and their Audiences

As of July 2021, financial losses to the nation's nonprofit arts and culture organizations were an estimated **$17.97 billion**. 99% of producing and presenting organizations cancelled events during the pandemic—**a loss of 557 million ticketed admissions** impacting both arts organizations and audiences. Additionally, local area businesses—restaurants, lodging, retail, and parking—were severely impacted by cancelled arts and culture events with a loss of $17.6 billion in audience ancillary spending. Local government revenue losses were $6.0 billion and 1.03 million jobs were negatively affected because of cancelled events. **As of July 2021**:

- **BIPOC organizations** were more likely to report that they lack the financial resources needed to return to in-person programming than non-BIPOC organizations (55% vs. 38%).

- 77% of organizations were currently delivering virtual content/programming. Looking ahead, 29% will improve their online content, post-pandemic, while 18% expect to hold steady. 45% plan to reduce their virtual presence and 8% intend to discontinue it altogether.

4. The Pandemic's Impact on Artist & Creative Workers

Artists/creatives were—and remain—among the most severely affected segment of the nation's workforce.

- At the height of the pandemic in 2020, 63% experienced unemployment and 95% lost creative income.
- BIPOC artists had higher rates of unemployment than white artists in 2020 due to the pandemic (69% vs. 60%) and lost a larger percentage of their creative income (61% vs. 56%).
- 37% of artists were unable to access or afford food at some point during the pandemic and 58% did not visit a medical professional due to an inability to pay.

5. The Economic Importance of Getting Artists and Creative Workers Back to Work

- The arts are a formidable industry in the U.S. Prior to the pandemic, the nation's arts and culture sector (nonprofit, commercial, education) was **a $919.7 billion industry** that supported **5.2 million jobs** and represented **4.3% of the nation's economy** in 2019. (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis)
- The arts industry is an economic catalyst, an industry that accelerates economic recovery. A growth in arts employment has a positive and causal effect on overall employment. (Indiana University)

With this research and reporting in mind, we urge Congress to:

- Support legislation to invest in the country's creative economy and promote economic inclusion; to recognize artists, entrepreneurs, and nonprofit arts organizations as contributors to the small business community; improve and revitalize rural, remote, and underserved areas; and support the creative economy through federal programs and actions.
- Direct the Small Business Administration (SBA) and other agencies to ensure that existing economic development programs and tools encompass the creative economy, supporting the range of business types included in this industry.
- Ensure inclusion of creative fields in vocational education and training supports.
- Increase comprehensive measurement of the impact of the creative economy on the overall U.S. economy with coordination among the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, including updating NAICS Code classification system to better reflect the 21st century creative economy.
- Expand programs at the SBA to increase micro-loans, business loans, and technical assistance for artists and other creative businesses. Continue to make the SBA more responsive to the needs of non-employer businesses and businesses with fewer than 20 employees. Serving these businesses is a matter of equity and advancing the overall economy.
- Require the Economic Development Administration (EDA) and U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Administration to ensure that traditional economic development tools, such as incubators and grant programs, support the creative economy throughout the country.

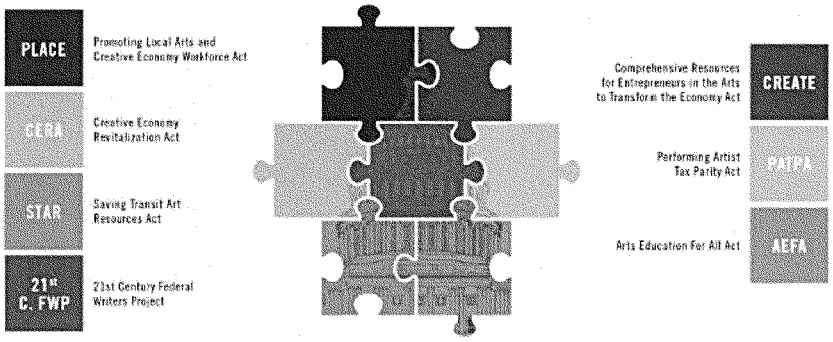
- Allow creative economy businesses to partake in the existing New Market Tax Credit.
- Ensure arts-based community development and creative placemaking is directly supported in the Community Reinvestment Act.

We have also included statements in support of the creative economy and the creative workforce from the following sources:

- **Americans for the Arts summary of seven creative economy bills currently before Congress**
- **U.S. Conference of Mayors resolutions**
- **113 Local Chambers of Commerce Letter to Congress**

FEDERAL CREATIVE ECONOMY LEGISLATION

There is currently more federal creative economy legislation under consideration than ever before in U.S. history. These seven bills together map a new, more equitable and impactful policy landscape for creative businesses and workers. Were all these bills to pass into law, they would improve the lives of all Americans by opening billions of dollars in investment opportunity for creative businesses and entrepreneurs, expanding opportunity for current and future workers, and boosting the U.S. economy.



Through public policy, we can collectively achieve a stronger creative sector, which would drive economic growth and social cohesion and would ensure a better creative life for all. Should these bills, or their concepts, become law:

- The creative economic engine would be recognized and supported for the powerhouse that it is.
- Cultural entrepreneurs and small businesses could access the capital to grow and contribute to local economies.
- Displaced and marginalized creative workers would be taxed and supported appropriately and centered in policy reforms.
- Creative skills development would sit alongside other essential skills to educate a next generation workforce.
- The integration of art in public spaces would be codified as a necessary expenditure toward a health, vibrant community.

Federal public policy reflects national priorities. Our country must invest in creativity to progress and compete. The introduction, sponsorship, and endorsement of these bills lays the groundwork for a vibrant, prosperous, creative future.

LEGISLATIVE CONNECTIVITY *(see page 3)*

EQUITY
These policies would correct inequities in federal policy and prioritize marginalized communities.

WORKERS
These bills fund creative workers to work and improve labor policy to support independent workers.

BUSINESSES
This legislation would expand opportunity and protections for all creative businesses.

EDUCATION
These bills expand access to lifelong arts education and support skill-building for creative workers.

COMMUNITY AND SECTOR IMPACT *(see page 4)*

FINANCIAL IMPACT
The financial impact of this proposed legislation, collectively, is in the billions of dollars, and would impact both workers and businesses.

POLICY IMPACT
The language in these bills fundamentally expands access, opportunity, and support for creative small businesses and arts workers.

HUMAN IMPACT
The U.S.'s 5.1 million creative workers, as well as students, culturebearers, and community members, would all be impacted by these bills.

THE BILLS

Never in U.S. history have there been seven bills introduced in Congress to address and improve the creative economy and the lives of the creative workforce. Together, these bills offer a new vision to supercharge the creative economic powerhouse and ensure a full, vibrant creative life for all Americans.



PLACE

To be re-introduced January 26, 2022
Sponsors: Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI), Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME)

The **Promoting Local Arts and Creative Economy Workforce Act** (PLACE Act) bolsters local creative economies and workers in creative industries. It amends existing legislation to include the arts, creates new creative economy grants, and directs funding for creative businesses.



CERA

Bill numbers: **HR 5019 / S 2858**
Sponsors: Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández (D-NM), Rep. Jay Obernolte (R-CA), Sen. Ben Luján (D-NM)

The Creative Economy Revitalization Act (**CERA**), a bi-partisan workforce bill, authorizes $300m in grants to pay local creative workers through public creative projects like festivals, performances, public art, narrative gathering from first responders and marginalized communities, and arts education work.



STAR

Bill numbers: **HR 2380**
Sponsors: Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC)

The Saving Transit Arts Resources Act (**STAR Act**) restores control to local transit authorities regarding art and non-functional landscaping in federally funded transit projects. It returns federal transportation policy to what was the status quo for 30 years until a 2015 reauthorization unexpected prohibited such purposes.



CREATE

Bill numbers: **HR 6381**
Sponsors: Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI), Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX), Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-MI)

The bi-partisan Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act (**CREATE Act**) aligns policy to serve those that make our creative economy prosper. It expands SBA and EDA loan programs, and integrates creative work into support programs.



21CFWP

Bill numbers: **HR 3054**
Sponsors: Rep. Ted Lieu (D-CA), Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández (D-NM)

Inspired by the 1935 Federal Writers' Project of the New Deal Era, the 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act (21CFWP) will help address the mass unemployment of writers by authorizing a new grant program and will create a nationally administered archives for the commissioned writing.



PATPA

Bill numbers: **HR 4750 / S 2872**
Sponsors: Rep. Judy Chu (D-CA), Rep. Vern Buchanan (R-FL), Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA), Sen. Bill Hagerty (R-TN)

The Performing Arts Tax Parity Act (**PATPA**), a bi-partisan bill in both the House and the Senate, updates the Qualified Performing Artist tax deduction, modernizing a provision that has been on the books since it was signed into law in the 1980's so that middle-class arts workers can deduct common business expenses.



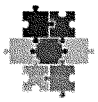
AEFA

Bill numbers: **HR 5581**
Sponsors: Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME), Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández (D-NM)

The Arts Education for All Act (**AEFA**), the broadest arts education bill ever introduced, supports universal arts education from pre-K through 12th grade, as well as in the juvenile justice system. It closes existing equity gaps to improve health, academic, social, and career success.

LEGISLATIVE CONNECTIVITY

These seven bills have common aims. Both innovative policies and line-by-line adjustments will impact and improve the lives of creative workers, increase opportunity for creative businesses, expand opportunity to access education in the arts, creativity, and innovation, and correct inequities in current policy.



EQUITY

Racial and cultural equity, particularly for culturebearers, narratives from marginalized groups, and access to arts education, are central to this legislative push. Five of the bills address racial, geographic, economic, and cultural equity.

CERA and 21CFWP include **specific calls to commission narratives from marginalized populations**, and CERA and AEFA both center **funding for arts education for all**, including the **support of culturebearers** who carry traditional knowledge forward. PLACE adjusts policy to **ensure Indigenous artisans earn fairer revenue** from creative work and protects Native heritage, and CREATE **expands access to capital for creative entrepreneurs**, particularly in rural settings.



WORKERS

The country's 5.1 million creative workers have long been unable to fully access federal opportunities and programs; these bills and seek to address that inequity. Six of the bills directly impact the livelihoods of creative workers.

PLACE and PATPA **adjust tax codes that currently disadvantage artists** so they can deduct fair value for donated work and access tax credits and deductions more appropriately. CERA and 21CFWP **authorize direct-to-artist grants for work**, while STAR ensures transit money can **support creators of public art**. AEFA invests in **skill-building for creative educators and future workers**, and PLACE, through various provisions, **improves workforce policy** for creative workers and **increases access to capital** for creative businesses.



BUSINESSES

In the U.S., there are over 673,000 creative businesses—9-in-10 of them small or solo businesses—that will benefit from modest changes in current federal policy. Three of the bills bolster both creative businesses and entrepreneurs.

CREATE **expands loan programs** and capital for creative businesses, creative entrepreneurs, and non-creative businesses who engage creative workers, and **improves access to economic development tools**. PLACE increases access to **technical assistance, startup and apprenticeship grants, removes barriers to disaster relief funding** for creative businesses, **and tax incentives**. And PATPA **corrects tax policy to ensure artists can** deduct the cost of unreimbursed business expenses.



EDUCATION

The U.S. economy works best when future workers are fully prepared—including in the arts, creativity, and innovation. Three of the bills expand and increase access to education in the arts, creativity, and innovation for all Americans.

AEFA calls for **universal arts education and rigorous research** to measure and improve impact. CERA provides **support to both in-school and community arts education**, particularly of marginalized histories and heritages. And PLACE authorizes **Creative Economy Apprenticeship Grants** under the Department of Education to helping **teach the next generation of creative economy workforce and advance creativity as a tool for future innovation** and competitive edge.

COMMUNITY AND SECTOR IMPACT

If passed, or adapted into other legislation, these policies would provide significant opportunity for creative workers and businesses, create positive economic and social ripple effects in American communities, and support a healthier, fuller, and more financially sustainable cultural life for all.

FINANCIAL IMPACT



These policy shifts would open access to billions in investment in the creative economy, generating positive economic ripple effects in every American community.

$3.5b+
in federal funds would be made more accessible to creative businesses for growth capital, skill building, relief, recovery, etc.

$919.7b
current annual amount generated by the creative economy to the U.S. GDP—which could be supercharged with better federal investment.

83%
of every $1 invested in creative entrepreneurs is re-invested locally—producing a high-return investment that betters every U.S. community.

POLICY IMPACT



Through modest adjustments to current language, these bills will increase inclusion of creative enterprise in federal, state, and local programs, with significant social return on investment.

15+
federal departments would become more accessible to creative work through these bills, boosting the sector's innovative potential.

30+
non-arts sectors that would benefit from policy support of the creative economy, including education, health, and tourism and hospitality.

100's
of documented positive impacts of creative economy-supportive policy: higher test scores, rising property values, stronger social cohesion, and more.

HUMAN IMPACT



In addition to improving the lives of the U.S.'s creative workers, the policy shifts in these bills would directly affect tens of millions of Americans beyond the creative sector.

5.1m
people in the U.S. are creative workers, over a third of whom are independent workers or entrepreneurs, all of whom are essential to local economies.

330m
people—which is to say every American—take part in and are bettered economically, professionally, and socially by creative work.

86%
of Americans agree that creative organizations are important to local businesses and the economy, whether they engage with the arts themselves or not.

A MOVEMENT FOR ALL—WITHIN AND BEYOND THE CREATIVE SECTOR

Collectively these bills have over 400 endorsements from not only the creative sector but labor, housing, community development, planning, and business. Some of the driving organizations include: the Get Creative Workers Working Coalition, Be An Arts Hero/Arts Workers United, the Performing Arts Alliance, Americans for the Arts, the National Association of Music Merchants, Grantmakers in the Arts, the Freelancers Union, the American Planning Association, the National Alliance of Economic and Community Development Associations, and Transportation 4 America/SmartGrowth America.

Learn more about why good policy for the creative economy is good for all Americans at **http://www.creativeworkers.net.**

This Explainer was produced by Americans for the Arts. Find out more at **AmericansForTheArts.org** ver.1.18.22

U.S. Conference of Mayors

89th Annual Meeting

In Support of the Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA)

- **WHEREAS**, the United States must help mitigate creative worker displacement, stimulate local creative workforce growth, strengthen connections for local arts, culture, creative small businesses and networks, create a pipeline for new arts, culture and creative jobs, enrich communities, increase access to culture, and invest in artists and other creative workers, as well as local economies, harmed by COVID-19; and

  WHEREAS, in addition to being an economic driver of 4.3% of the country's GDP, arts and culture have significant economic, social, and individual impact. The presence of arts and culture drives additional spending on local businesses, restaurants, and hotels, increase property values and improves education outcomes for students, boosts community pride and social cohesion, and inspires political and social activation; and

  WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 crisis, artists were greatly displaced. At the height of the pandemic, two-thirds of all creative workers (2.7 million people) were completely unemployed, and even now the unemployment rate of the sector remains 3-4 times the national rate. At the height of the pandemic in 2020, 63% experienced unemployment. Creative economy jobs employment dropped by 53%, and have only recovered about half of that to date; and

  WHEREAS, Congresswoman Teresa Leger-Fernandez of New Mexico has introduced a new bill entitled Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA) that seeks to both support and employ artists and creative workers and strengthen local economies by galvanizing and investing in a civic infrastructure fueled by creative workers and a recovering creative workforce; and

  WHERAS, the CERA legislation will get creative workers back into jobs by creating a workforce grants program within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The legislation will require that grantees create art that is publicly accessible such as free concert series, large-scale murals, photography exhibits, published stories or dance performances; and

  WHEREAS, the grants proposed in CERA would go to local, state, and tribal agencies, workforce investment boards, and public or private nonprofit entities who would hire local creative workers and produce publicly-available creative projects that meet local needs and priorities; and

  WHEREAS, CERA was developed in collaboration with many partners in the creative

economy, including the Get Creative Workers Working coalition, which is made up of 200 local, state, and national cultural organizations and agencies,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors supports any and all efforts to get creative workers working again, including enactment of the Creative Economy Revitalization Act of 2021, or the "CERA Act".

U.S. Conference of Mayors

89th Annual Meeting

Urging Increased Support for Arts and Cultural Institutions in our Nation's Rebuilding and Recovery

- **WHEREAS**, this pandemic has severely impacted our cities in many ways with crippling impacts on artists, arts workers and our arts and cultural organizations, who are integral to enabling our communities to survive and thrive economically, culturally and emotionally; and

  WHEREAS, it is our arts and cultural communities that are helping address social isolation and mental health issues, providing direct health benefits to our communities, from seniors to children, and members of our society who are under-resourced, hard to count, and more vulnerable now than they have ever been; and

  WHEREAS, the country is at grave risk of permanently losing essential arts and cultural organizational partners that are critical to our national identity and are essential to accelerate our regional recovery efforts; and

  WHEREAS, as our nation moves forward, we have a singular opportunity to integrate arts, culture and the creative economy into our national recovery and revitalization efforts; recognizing the great value of purposefully integrating artists and arts organizations into community revitalization efforts; bringing deeper understanding to the catalytic value of artists and the arts in developing stronger and more equitable communities; and

  WHEREAS, new initiatives across the country continue to confirm the irrefutable benefit that comes when we firmly position the arts at the table with land-use, transportation, economic development, education, housing, infrastructure, health, climate change, diversity and public safety strategies; and

  WHEREAS, the hardest year for the arts and culture industry in many ways is ahead as government orders to shut down disappear, eligibility for key federal aid will disappear;

and

WHEREAS, keeping critical federal support open through 2022 ensures the arts have resources to aid in the recovery and rebuilding of our communities; and

WHEREAS, as Congress and the Administration formulates future infrastructure and recovery packages, greater relief is needed for the recovery of our arts and culture communities,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors urges Congress and the Administration to provide increased COVID-19 relief and recovery support for the arts and culture sector. Specifically, mayors urge for legislative relief that:

- Identifies opportunities for artists and arts organizations to be supported by federal programs for infrastructure, education, job creation, and health, coordinating with the Departments of Education, Commerce, Transportation, HUD, Labor, Agriculture, Energy, Justice, EPA, and State; the NEA, NEH, IMLS, and other cultural agencies; local and state government partners; and tribal governments.
- Extends the ERTC beyond 2021 and modifies nonprofit eligibility beyond the current gross receipts test to reflect the increased costs charitable organizations experience as they struggle to maintain or expand services to meet local needs throughout the health and economic crisis.
- Invests in reopening the creative economy to enable innovation and supports dedicated relief resources for nonprofit organizations and their workforce, as proposed in the WORK Now Act (S. 740 / H.R.1987) and emerging legislation that will support the creative workforce.
- Supports the nonprofit arts infrastructure and increases charitable giving by expanding the above-the-line, universal charitable deduction tax incentive through significantly increasing the cap and extending the provision at least through 2022 (S. 618 / HR.1704 /H.R. 1081).
- Enacts policies that will ensure rapid processing of the artist visas and consular appointments that are essential to supporting international cultural activity.
- Creates positions within the Executive branch and inter-agency coordination to support the arts, culture, and creative economy, with particular attention to relief and recovery efforts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, mayors see all too clearly that we cannot survive without connection. We have the opportunity to bring the full power of the creative sector to help develop and deploy policy that advances an equitable recovery, nurtures our collective wellbeing, and cultivates a better tomorrow.

Letter from 113 Chambers of Commerce in Support of Creative Workforce

April 26, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker
United States House of Representatives 1236 Longworth House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer, Leader United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Leader United States House of Representatives 2468 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Leader United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leaders Schumer, McConnell, and McCarthy:

Thank you for your leadership and continued work to protect Americans, stabilize the economy, and ensure the survival of key institutions and sectors during this challenging time. We represent a group of **113 chambers of commerce from 46 states** collectively working with **over 33 million employers, employees, and businesses** of all sizes and industries to respond to our national public health and economic crisis.

The 2020 CARES Act and the new American Rescue Plan Act provided much-needed relief to many of our members, however, there are critical gaps in the aid that fail to meet the needs of the creative economy and cultural infrastructure. A report from the Brookings Institution[1] found that the country's 670,000 creative economy businesses (which generate $919.7 billion each year towards the GDP)[2] have collectively lost at least $150 billion, and that over half of all workers in the creative sector remain unemployed.

Johns Hopkins University and the international Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development warn[3] that the creative sector is among the most impacted industries in the country— with damaging ripple effects to restaurants, tourism, travel, and local businesses. Bureau of Economic Analysis data shows that the sector contracted by 59% between the end of 2019 and mid- 2020—twice the rate of other highly impacted industries—and is rebounding at a slower rate.[4]

We request that the U.S. Congress work swiftly to enact the following provisions within the infrastructure and recovery package known as the American Jobs Plan. These proposals echo the *Put Creative Workers to Work* policy platform endorsed by over 2,300 creative businesses and creative workers in all 50 states.[5]

- Allocate $14 billion to incentivize local, state, and tribal businesses and governments to put creative workers to work and activate cultural infrastructure, including hiring or tax credits to incentivize businesses and local and state agencies to accelerate

hiring, re-hiring, or retention of creative workers; funds to incentivize financial institutions to invest in small creative businesses and creative entrepreneurs; grants to cover restart costs for small creative

[1] Source: Brookings Institution, *Lost Art*, 2020
[2] Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2020
[3] Source: Johns Hopkins University and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
[4] Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2020
[5] Visit http://www.creativeworkers.net

businesses and provide capital for the creation of new creative product to be sold; and support for local and state creative workforce programs.

- Allocate $3 billion to spark an American cultural renaissance via the NEA, NEH, IMLS, and other federal agencies, including through creative jobs, fellowships, residencies, and commissions designed to drive local economic growth and community cohesion, produce free entertainment to encourage local spending, and incentivize local and state workforce development and infrastructure programs.

- Allocate $1 billion in arts and creativity-based education for recovery via the Department of Education, including a bridge program to incentivize retention of arts educators within education infrastructure.

- Direct the Federal Reserve to broaden their nonprofit lending facility under the Main Street Lending Program to specifically benefit mid-size nonprofits to those with more than 500 employees, and a loan forgiveness option.

As we face the road to economic recovery, we must prioritize creative infrastructure and the sector of creative and cultural institutions, particularly because they will help drive the recovery of local small businesses and economies of all types. With key investments and funding, cultural institutions can push the recovery forward across the country.

Sincerely,

Alabama
Mobile Area Chamber, Mobile, AL

Arkansas
Greater Bentonville Area Chamber of Commerce, Bentonville, AR

Arizona
Visit Tucson, Tucson, AZ

California
Los Angeles Area Chamber, Los Angeles, CA
Orange County Business Council, Orange County, CA Pacific Grove Chamber of Commerce, Pacific Grove, CA Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, Santa Monica, CA

Colorado
Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Aurora,
CO Boulder Chamber of Commerce,
Boulder, CO
Crested Butte Chamber of Commerce, Crested Butte, CO

Connecticut
Central Connecticut Chambers of Commerce,
Bristol, CT Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce,
Norwalk, CT MetroHartford Alliance, Hartford, CT

Florida
AMPLIFY Clearwater, Clearwater, FL
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce,
Miami, FL Lakeland Chamber of Commerce,
Lakeland, FL

Georgia
Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Atlanta, GA

Hawaii
Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI
Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI

Idaho
Boise Metro Chamber, Boise, ID

Illinois
Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry,
Joliet, IL Oak Lawn Chamber of Commerce, Chicago,
IL
Oak Park - River Forest Chamber of Commerce, Oak Park,
IL The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce,
Springfield, IL

Indiana
Indy Chamber, Indianapolis, IN
Southwest Indiana Chamber of Commerce, Evansville, IN

Iowa
DuBuque Area Chamber of Commerce,
DuBuque, IA Iowa City Area Business
Partnership, Iowa City, IA

Kansas
Salina Area Chamber of Commerce, Salina, KS

Kentucky
Greater Louisville Inc., Louisville, KY

Louisiana
Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce, Shreveport, LA

Maryland
Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce, Gaithersburg, MD

Massachusetts
Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, Cape Cod, MA
Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, Boston,
MA MIddlesex West Chamber of Commerce,
Acton, MA Nashoba Valley Chamber of
Commerce, Littleton, MA
Springfield Regional Chamber of Commerce, Springfield,
MA Stoneham Chamber of Commerce, Stoneham, MA
Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, Worcester, MA

Michigan
Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Regional Chamber, Ann
Arbor, MI Detroit Regional Chamber, Detroit, MI
Flint & Genesee Group, Flint, MI
Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce, Saginaw, MI

Minnesota
Minneapolis Regional Chamber, Minneapolis,
MN St. Paul Area Chamber, St. Paul, MN

Mississippi
Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce, Gulfport, MS

Missouri
Greater St. Louis, Inc., St. Louis, MO

Montana
Billings Chamber of Commerce, Billings, MT

Nebraska
Kearney Area Chamber of Commerce, Kearney, NE

Nevada
Carson City Chamber of Commerce, Carson City,
NV Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce, Reno,
NV Urban Chamber of Commerce, Las Vegas,
NV

New Hampshire
Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce, Concord,

NH Greater Manchester Chamber, Manchester, NH

New Jersey
Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey,
Voorhees, NJ Greater Elizabeth Chamber of
Commerce, Elizabeth, NJ
Middlesex County Regional Chamber of Commerce & Convention & Visitors Bureau,
New Brunswick, NJ
Phillipsburg Area Chamber of Commerce, Phillipsburg, NJ
Princeton Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce,
Princeton, NJ Somerset County Business Partnership,
Bridgewater, NJ
Southern Ocean County Chamber of Commerce, Long Beach Island Region, NJ

New York
Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce, Ithaca,
NY Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, Brooklyn,
NY Capital Region Chamber, Albany, NY
Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce, Rochester, NY

North Carolina
Boone Area Chamber of Commerce, Boone, NC
Carolina Foothills Chamber of Commerce, Tryon,
NC
Carteret County Chamber of Commerce, Morehead City,
NC Raleigh Chamber of Commerce, Raleigh, NC
The Chamber, Leading Business in Cabarrus, Concord,
NC Tyrrell County Chamber of Commerce, Columbia,
NC Wake Forest Area Chamber of Commerce, Wake
Forest, NC

Ohio
Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, Cincinnati, OH

Oklahoma
Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, Oklahoma City, OK

Oregon
Portland Business Alliance, Portland, OR

Pennsylvania
Allentown Chamber of Commerce, Allentown,
PA Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce,
Bethlehem, PA
East Penn Area Chamber of Commerce, Lehigh
Valley, PA Easton Area Chamber of Commerce,
Easton, PA
Emmaus Main Street Partners, Emmaus, PA
Erie Regional Chamber & Growth Partnership,

Erie, PA Greater Bath Area Chamber of Commerce, Bath, PA
Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, Lehigh Valley, PA Greater Northern Lehigh Chamber of Commerce, Lehigh Valley, PA Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, Pittsburgh, PA Hellertown-Lower Saucon Chamber of Commerce, Hellertown, PA Nazareth Business Council, Nazareth, PA
Northampton Area Chamber of Commerce, Northampton, PA Southern Lehigh Chamber of Commerce, Lehigh Valley, PA Western Lehigh Chamber of Commerce, Lehigh Valley, PA

Rhode Island
Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce, Newport, RI
Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, Providence, RI

South Carolina
Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, North Charleston, SC Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce, Columbia, SC Greensboro Chamber of Commerce, Greensboro, SC
Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce, Hilton Head, SC

Tennessee
Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce, Chattanooga, TN

Texas
Greater Houston Partnership, Houston, TX
McAllen Chamber of Commerce, McAllen, TX Rio Grande Valley Partnership, Weslaco, TX
San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, San Antonio, TX

Utah
Cache Valley Chamber of Commerce, Logan, UT

Virginia
ChamberRVA, Richmond, VA
Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce, Tysons, VA
Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce, Mount Vernon, WA

Washington
Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Seattle, WA Thurston County Chamber, Olympia, WA

West Virginia

Huntington Regional Chamber of Commerce, Huntington, WV West Virginia Chamber of Commerce, Charleston, WV

Wisconsin
Envision Greater Fond du Lac, Fond du Lac, WI Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce, Appleton, WI
Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, Madison, WI

Wyoming
Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce, Cheyenne, WY

Ms. Finks,

I would like to add my 2 cents in regards to H.R.5019 - Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA).

In a county in the state of Georgia where our number one economic driver is tourism, the arts play a distinct and important role. The halo effect from our nonprofit arts has an immediate impact on the local restaurant, retail and ancillary businesses. The average ticket buying couple that goes out for an evening of the arts will spend an additional $49 in the local economy.

Art by the Numbers*

- **The creative industry makes up 4.2% of the nation's GDP**, or $730 billion, and supports 4.6 million jobs. The arts sector is exceeded only by retail.
- **In Fulton County, art and culture is king, employing 45,219 people** — more than No. 1 employer Delta, No. 2 Walmart, or No. 3 Emory University. If all of Fulton County's arts and culture was housed in a single organization, it would be the largest employer in the county.
- **Small investment. Big return.** Nationally, federal, state and local governments spend about $5 billion on the nonprofit arts—and collect $27.5 billion in nonprofit arts and culture revenue.
- **82% of Americans believe arts and culture are important** to local businesses and the economy.

*Source: Arts and Prosperity Study 5, State and Local Government Affairs for Americans for the Arts

Andy Gaines
General Manager

Hi Lauren,

I just learned that the government is considering a bill to help support the work of creative artists. I just wanted to let you know that this would be game changing for so many people out there who work so hard and struggle so much for basic necessities in the process of being an artist.

Finding funding for creative work that has the potential to contribute so much to society is one of the greatest challenges that I have had in my life. I have also had health challenges that I have been unable to properly attend to as a result. Which makes productivity even more difficult.

I know some artists who have picked up and moved to other countries because they are able to find support there where they have not found it in the United States.

This bill would help to bring heart back to America. We must be a country that rewards and encourages humanity and cultural contributions from artists. I believe that many of the greatest challenges we are dealing with right now have to do with misplaced values on wealth and greed above compassion and humanity.

This bill could be a powerful contribution for helping to heal the cultural wounds that have been festering and contributing to a great deal of illness, division and corruption in this country.

I do hope that this bill to support artist's passes as I believe it is a powerful 1st step along the path of recovering our humanity.

Thank you so much,

Aria

Arts Alliance IL

FBRK Impact House
200 W Madison St, Fl 3
Chicago, IL 60606

312.855.3105
artsalliance.org

February 3, 2022

U.S. House Committee on Small Business
c/o Honorable Nydia Velazquez, Chair
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Valazquez:

I am writing on behalf of Arts Alliance Illinois regarding the House Small Business Committee hearing on the creative economy (January 19, 2022). I urge you and the Committee to recognize the *power* of arts and culture as an economic driver, the *peril* of the arts' lack of federal support, and the *promise* that the creative sector offers towards revitalizing Illinois' economy.

Arts Alliance Illinois is a statewide nonprofit that champions Illinois' creative sector: individual artists, nonprofit arts organizations, and creative small businesses. These stakeholders are essential to the strength and recovery of the communities in your district and across Illinois.

Arts and cultural production contributes more than $30 billion and 224,000 jobs to our state's economy each year (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis), and the nonprofit arts sector alone delivers over $478 million in state and local government revenue annually (Arts & Economic Prosperity 5). In addition, artists contribute powerfully to our communities through innovative projects in education, public health, community development, violence prevention, and more.

The creative sector, however, is not receiving the support it needs. According to a January 2022 survey by our organization, Illinois nonprofit arts organizations and creative businesses lost 31 percent of their revenue on average to COVID last year and are on pace to match those losses over the first six months of 2022. Moreover, 39 percent of creative professionals in Illinois have lost over half of their income since the start of COVID (March 2020 - present).

This crisis is a matter of equity. BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) arts organizations in particular continue to feel the pain because they have comparatively fewer resources for recovery. For example, heading into the pandemic, the unrestricted net assets of Black-led organizations were 76 percent smaller than white-led organizations.

I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery of arts and culture and create a Department and Secretary of Arts & Culture. The Tax Parity Act, A Percent for the Arts, Creative Economy Revitalization Act, Pro Act, the DAWN Act, and the 21st Century Federal Writers Project will help the creative sector promote the sustained revitalization of your district and the state.

Sincerely,

Claire Rice
Executive Director
Arts Alliance Illinois

cc: Honorable Marie Newman (IL-03), U.S. House of Representatives

ARTS IN A CHANGING AMERICA **ART CHANGE US**

Written Testimony of Daniela Alvarez
REFRAME and Research Manager, Arts in a Changing America
To the House Committee on Small Business
Re: In Support of the Creative Economy, "Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy"
February 1, 2022

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

As was made clear in the recent "Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" hearing on January 19, 2022, the abundant data, studies, and testimonies surrounding the creative economy have unquestionably revealed the arts' significant financial contribution to their local communities and the nation. And yet the millions of jobs created, businesses contracted, and investments circulated from the arts sector are not reflected in the support given to artists and cultural organizations.

And while the disparity of funding between large, predominantly white institutions and smaller cultural organizations is well known, the magnitude of how inequitable the allocation of resources is didn't hit me until I began organizing in my city of Los Angeles.

In 2015, the Arts in a Changing America team was invited to program in Los Angeles to help reframe the arts conversation in the city. We began our work understanding that the communities we enter already have been doing the work and will continue after our presence. So, it was pivotal for us to meet with organizations and artists embedded in the city's fabric to inform us of how best to support their needs through our programming. The listening sessions we held spanned over three years, where we visited over 25 organizations in different neighborhoods across LA county.

At the end of every meeting, we would ask, "Who else would you recommend that we meet? Who else is doing the work on the ground?" In all the responses, we would be directed to local and diverse arts organizations, artists, and organizers that, in many ways, are the foundation for their respective neighborhoods. These organizations, as described by Arts in a Changing America Director, Roberta Uno, are cultural community anchors—"arts pioneers and innovators, placekeepers and resources to the people in historic neighborhoods that are undergoing displacement, rapid gentrification, and displacement."[1]

We were connected to and had the honor to work alongside organizations like Lula Washington Dance Theater, The Los Angeles Theatre Company, Self Help Graphics & Art, and the Japanese

[1] Uno, Roberta. "What's Holding Us Back?: A Forum on Nationalism, Xenophobia, and American Theater Now."; *Theater*, November 2018; 48 (3): 39–79.

American Cultural & Community Center, the art and cultural hub of their neighborhoods that contribute to the creative economy. But even more so, these organizations also provide safe spaces and vital resources that promote the community's well-being. For example, it was incredible to see how an organization like Self Help Graphics provided exhibition space, artist residencies, workshops, family programming, open studios, a mobile art unit, and promoted advocacy and anti-displacement efforts with only a handful of people on staff.

Likewise, what was incredible was finding out that in Los Angeles, $88 million in public funding is granted to only 4 organizations. In comparison, $4 million of funds are provided to over 200 organizations in a competitive application process.[2] And Los Angeles is hardly an anomaly in the larger field of cultural philanthropy.

Most recently, in 2017, the Helicon Collaborative looked back at its 2011 report *Fusing Arts, Culture, and Social Change: High Impact Strategies for Philanthropy* authored by Holly Sidford to see how the cultural landscape of funding had changed over the past five years.[3] The 2017 report revealed that "just 2 percent of all cultural institutions receive nearly 60 percent of all contributed revenue, up approximately 5 percentage points over a decade."[4] And the institutions that compose the 2 percent, which again receive the bulk of grants, gifts, and contributions, all have over $5 million annual budgets.

The lack of resources and vulnerability of small arts organizations that already were in a precarious state is now worse with the rise of the pandemic. It is thus imperative to not only support the creative economy imperiled during the COVID-19 pandemic but also ensure that the funds reach the already under-resourced, small organizations that are often in service to their community in an immeasurable way.

We must seize this opportunity to support the creative economy with decisive legislation and an equitable approach.

Sincerely,



Daniela Alvarez
REFRAME and Research Manager, Arts in a Changing America
daniela@artchangeus.com

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[2] Los Angeles County Arts Commission. (2017, April) LA County Arts Report Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative. www.lacountyarts.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/lacac17_ceiireport_final.pdf
[3] Sidford, Holly. "Fusing arts, culture and social change." *Philanthropy at Its Best, National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy* (2011).
[4] Helicon Collaborative, Not Just Money: Equity Issues in Cultural Philanthropy (2017).

ARTS MANAGEMENT
THE LEAP INSTITUTE AT COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

House Committee on Small Business
2361 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

January 16, 2022

Honorable Members of the House Committee on Small Business:

The COVID-19 crisis illuminated several structural weaknesses in the creative economy. One of these weaknesses concerns data. Many industries in the creative economy are notoriously difficult to quantify due to the lack of specificity in official data. This is largely a function of how various federal institutions collect and organize data through the use of the United States Office of Management and Budget's North American Industrial Classification System codes, or "NAICS" codes.

Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, understanding the scale and scope of a creative economy within a region was an exercise policymakers undertook as part of broader regional analysis activities. Now, a robust understanding of how many firms, places, and employees may exist in a given region's creative economy is necessary to understand underlying network dynamics and for possible future relief efforts. Additionally, the rapid growth of the creative economy leading up to the COVID-19 crisis warranted more attention paid to it in terms of research and monitoring its health. Taking all of this into consideration, it is time to address how creative economy activity is captured by NAICS codes.

Capturing music venue activity is an example of how a NAICS code can be too broad. Currently, music venues are largely captured in either "711310 - Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events with Facilities" or "722410 - Drinking Places (Alcoholic Beverages)." Although both categories make sense in the bigger picture, the unfortunate situation is that the former also includes, air shows, boxing events, beauty pageants, and dance festivals among other cultural and sporting options while the latter includes tap rooms, taverns, and cocktail lounges which may or may not incorporate music to a significant degree.

Another challenging issue relates to how technology has transformed some aspects of the creative economy, e.g., where is electronic game development activity captured – "511210 - Software Publishing" or "519130 - Internet Publishing and Broadcasting and Web Search Portals"?... or both?

It is against this background that I offer the following initial changes to current NAICS codes. The NAICS is an important framework for data capture and analysis in the United States, Mexico, and Canada. In this situation, any suggested change to its components should be thoroughly vetted by a team comprised of people familiar with creative economy dynamics and those who are experts in the gathering and use of data within the federal government. I present these changes as suggestions to start a conversation and am more than happy to work with others in a collective effort to discuss, refine, and advance them for consideration at the federal level.

NOTE: Existing codes are in black. New codes are in red.

Codes	Titles
7224	Alcoholic beverage drinking places
722410	Bars, Lounges, Taverns, and Tap Rooms
722420	Music Venues with Alcoholic Beverages
722430	Comedy Clubs and Nightclubs with Alcoholic Beverages
7113	Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events
~~711310~~	~~Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events with Facilities~~
711310	Promoters of Music with Facilities
711311	Promoters of Theater, Dance, and Other Performing Arts with Facilities
711312	Promoters of Sports with Facilities
711313	Promoters of Agricultural and Community Events with Facilities
~~711320~~	~~Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events without Facilities~~
711320	Promoters of Music without Facilities
711321	Promoters of Theater, Dance, and Other Performing Arts without Facilities
711322	Promoters of Sports without Facilities
711323	Promoters of Agricultural and Community Events without Facilities
7114	Agents and Managers for Artists, Athletes, Entertainers, and Other Public Figures
711410	Agents and Managers for Artists, Entertainers, and Other Public Figures
711411	Agents and Managers for Athletes
7115	Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers
~~711510~~	~~Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers~~
711510	Independent Fine Artists
711511	Independent Dancers and Choreographers
711512	Independent Theater Artists, Producers, Directors, and Technicians
711513	Independent Film and Television Artists, Producers, Directors, and Technicians
711514	Independent Music Producers, Engineers, and Technicians
711515	Independent Radio Personalities, Commentators, and Announcers
711516	Independent Writers and Journalists
711517	Independent Photographers and Photojournalists
711518	Independent Actors and Models
711519	Independent Speakers, Entertainers, and Other Public Figures

For any questions, insights, or to discuss further, please contact me by phone: 940-453-6553, or by email: michael.seman@colostate.edu.

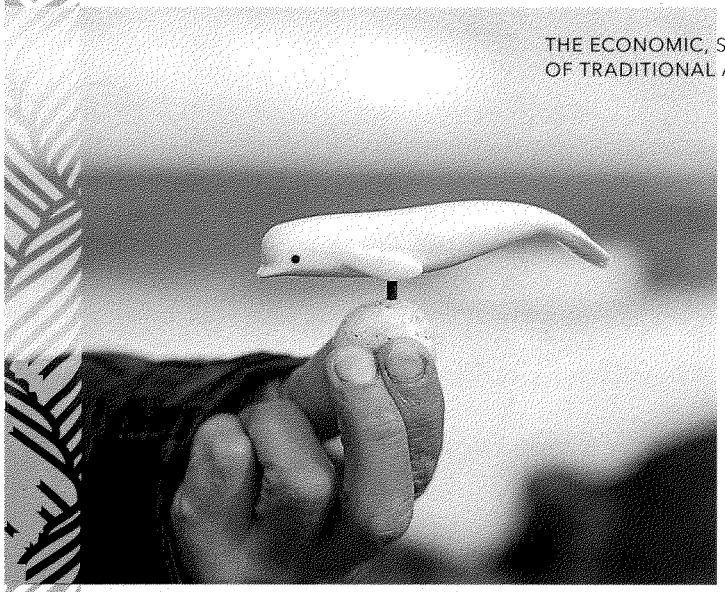
Sincerely,



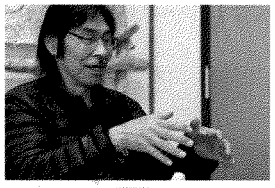
Dr. Michael Seman
Assistant Professor of Arts Management
Colorado State University

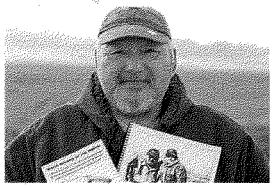
Arts of the Bering Strait Region

THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ROLE
OF TRADITIONAL ARTS AND CRAFTS










SALMON LAKE

"May I just say, keep an open mind about art.
Whatever it feeds you, let it feed you.
Whatever it gives you, let it happen...

Because whatever comes out from up here, it comes out beautiful...

What you are, your art is...
Give beauty to beauty, pass it on."



Mary Jane Litchard (Inupiaq)

INTRODUCTION

Art is Interconnected

THE BERING STRAIT REGION is located in one of the most remote parts of the world. The area includes the Seward Peninsula, Norton Sound, St. Lawrence Island, and Little Diomede Island.

With this rich diversity in culture and language comes artwork that shares intimate aspects of each culture's history, skills, traditions which have been passed down for thousands of years. Indigenous Art not only plays a critical role in preserving cultural ways of doing and speaking but perhaps now, more than ever, plays an important role in the local communities' economic landscape.

Today, hunters and gatherers combine subsistence harvesting with the cash economy to offset the high cost of living in rural Alaska. Families must navigate this new landscape, and the sale of art plays a critical role in the balance. Today, artists are economic drivers within their communities.

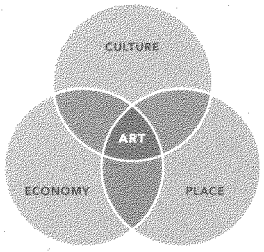
Tribal leaders at Kawerak, Inc., the regional non-profit tribal consortium serving the twenty federally recognized tribes in the region, see the local arts as an economic and cultural keystone. Kawerak's mission is to advance the capacity of our people and tribes for the benefit of the region. As such, Kawerak has prioritized Regional Capacity Building as a strategic focus, one that includes small business development and tourism expansion. Additionally, Kawerak recognizes culture and language priorities, including the need to support cultural traditions, harvest of subsistence materials, passing down of ancestral skills, and speaking Native languages, all of which provide meaning and social context that exists outside of the English language and Western practices.

In a region with a diverse cultural presence and growing reliance on the cash economy, mindfulness of interconnectedness—between thriving Indigenous culture, continued dependence on natural resources, and the ever-changing economic landscape within each community—is critical.

The artist community is a perfect example of this interconnectedness between culture, natural resources, and economy. The Bering Strait region is home to a diverse group of artists, from beaders and skin sewers to world-renowned ivory carvers. Kawerak is committed to learning the role that art plays in passing on traditional knowledge and understanding the relationship between subsistence activities and materials to create art, and ensuring access to the business tools and resources needed to support our region's artists.

To navigate the existing artist landscape, Kawerak, with financial assistance from First Peoples Fund, distributed a region-wide survey and coordinated artist interviews and focus group meetings. Over the course of two years, 172 surveys were collected region-wide. Kawerak social science consultant Sandhill Culture Craft facilitated five in-depth one-on-one artist interviews and three focus group meetings in three communities. This report, developed by McDowell Group, summarizes feedback from the artists and provides a snapshot of the artist landscape within the Bering Strait region. We hope this document offers you a glimpse of the richness of the region through the arts and how it is imperative to support the Indigenous arts through advocacy, funding, and program development.

— Kawerak, Inc.
Community Planning and Development



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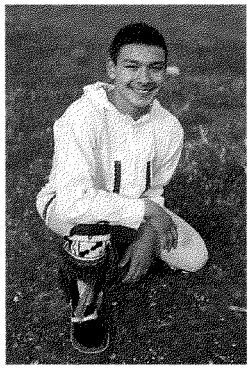
Ivory beluga, Edwin Noongwook, (St. Lawrence Island Yupik)

MaryJane Litchard (Inupiaq)

Benjamin Pungowiyi (St. Lawrence Island Yupik)

Denny (Yaava) Akeya (St. Lawrence Island Yupik)

Artists who responded to the survey and who participated in focus groups provided suggestions to strengthen the practice of traditional arts and crafts forms in the region. Access to materials, space to create work, support for selling art, and educational opportunities to pass on traditional methods were the most frequently mentioned areas of need. Specific suggestions are listed here; please see data on page 18.



David Miller, traditional dancer (Inupiaq)

SUGGESTIONS

Supporting Bering Strait Artists

Establish dedicated **arts-and-crafts workplaces** in communities.

Increase education and awareness about **ivory ban issues**, their potential implications, and action-steps.

Promote education about and development of opportunities for advertising and **selling works online.**

Build a network of art dealers who pay **equitable prices** for work.

Encourage youth interest in art.

Provide educational opportunities to **learn traditional arts**, including ways to learn skills requiring use of legally protected materials (e.g. walrus ivory, baleen).

Explore ways to support insurance and **shipping costs** associated with sending artwork to purchasers.

Encourage **grassroots organization** around arts sales, such as supporting small group of people transporting the work of multiple artists to conferences.

Promote **inter-generational teaching** and interactions about art and crafts (particularly within families).

The Bering Strait Region

COMMUNITIES

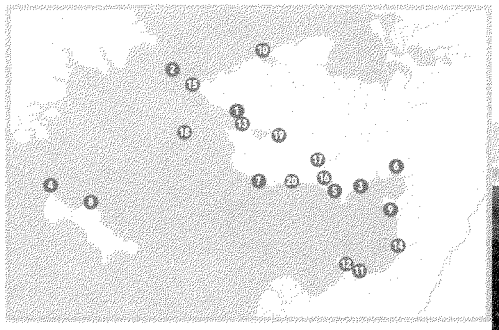
Twenty communities are located in the Kawerak service region, primarily on the coast or river systems. Sixteen of the communities are currently permanently inhabited:

Map #	*Community*	*Survey Participants**
1	Brevig Mission	4%
2	Diomede	4%
3	Elim	1%
4	Gambell	19%
5	Golovin	-
6	Koyuk	2%
7	Nome	13%
8	Savoonga	27%
9	Shaktoolik	-
10	Shishmaref	8%
11	St. Michael	-
12	Stebbins	1%
13	Teller	2%
14	Unalakleet	9%
15	Wales	1%
16	White Mountain	1%

Four more communities are now used primarily for fish camps or other subsistence uses:

17	Council
18	King Island
19	Mary's Igloo
20	Solomon

** In addition to artists living in the above communities, Anchorage (2%) and Other (6%) were also recorded.*





FACTS

230 miles from north to south

570 miles of coastline

23,000 square miles, the equivalent of the size of the state of West Virginia

9,300 residents, of which approximately...

7,000 are Alaska Native Inupiaq, St. Lawrence (Island) Yupik, and Central Yup'ik people

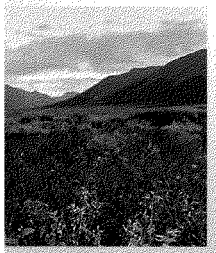
In villages outside of the main hub of Nome, Alaska Native peoples comprise 90 percent of the population

MORE INFO

"Kawerak. Our Region."
Available at:
kawerak.org/our-region



PRISTINE LANDSCAPES AND DEEPLY-ROOTED SUBSISTENCE LIFESTYLES



GRACE TENTHAL

THE BERING STRAIT REGION in northwestern Alaska covers about 23,000 square miles on the Seward Peninsula and includes St. Lawrence Island, King Island, Little Diomede Island, and the communities along the eastern and southeastern shores of Norton Sound. Three culturally distinct groups of Indigenous people—Inupiaq, Central Yup'ik, and St. Lawrence Island Yupik—have lived in the region for thousands of years.

The region contains 570 miles of coastline, approximately 2.3 million acres, and a varied landscape of open ocean, seasonal sea ice, coastal waters, river deltas, tundra, hilly regions, and mountain ranges. Subsistence has been a part of the region since time immemorial. Subsistence means more than hunting; it incorporates caring for the land and animals, and depends on an understanding of respect, reliance and interconnectedness between us all. Practices supplied families and entire communities with nourishment, tools, clothing and material for art. No part of the animal was wasted, as using all parts of the animal was a way to honor life and demonstrate gratitude for the gift the animal had given to the people. Subsistence practices within the region are heavily focused on hunting for marine mammals (seals, walrus, whale and polar bear), fishing for a variety of salmon and non-salmon species, moose and caribou hunting, reindeer herding, and gathering a variety of plants, berries, and eggs.

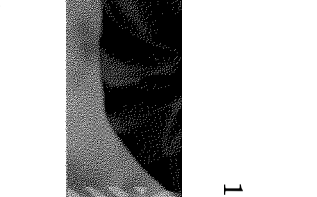
GAMBELL

Background on Study

A RECENT community needs assessment conducted within the Bering Strait region found high unemployment rates, 11.6 percent within the area compared to 6.6 percent statewide, as well as prevalent poverty with 30 percent of children below the poverty level compared to 14 percent in Alaska as a whole. Kawerak, Inc. made small business development a strategic priority to address the chronic unemployment and high poverty levels found in the Bering Strait.

Artists are vital contributors to their communities' existing economic landscapes. When artists have access to additional resources, new markets, and places to make art, there are opportunities for positive community economic development outcomes.

Utilizing grant funding from First Peoples Fund, Kawerak distributed a region-wide survey to ask artists directly about how to best support their creation of art and the extent to which arts contribute to their household income. The personal insights shared by the artists provided valuable information on how Kawerak and resource partners can build a well-planned, sustainable, and innovative program to support the individual artists in the Bering Strait region.



SURVEY

Based on a survey designed by the First Peoples Fund, Kawerak developed a 39-item survey tailored to the Bering Strait region. The survey examined:

- types of art created by Bering Strait artists
- how and where artists create their work
- contexts in which artists sell their art
- economic role of art in households
- infrastructure and training needs of artists in the region.

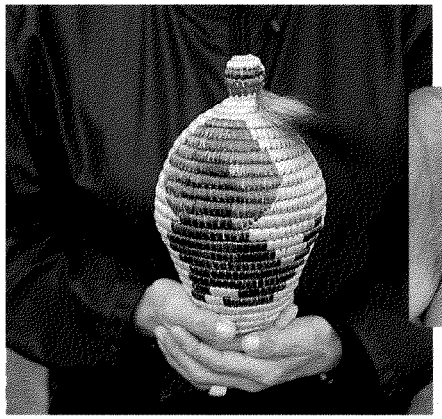
A total of 172 individuals completed the survey online or in-person. The average age of respondents was 46. Respondents were most likely to live in Savoonga, Gambell or Nome at the time of survey completion, and 95 percent of respondents identified as Alaska Native. More than a third of respondents described themselves as Mentor/Master/Mature artists with approximately 10-15 years or more of experience. Kawerak administered the survey, and McDowell Group compiled the results.

FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS

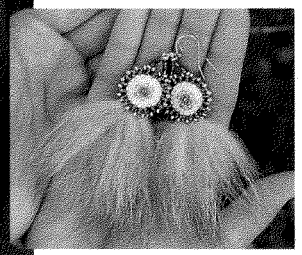
In 2019, five interviews (averaging one hour in length) and three focus groups (averaging two hours in length) were held with a total of 14 artists in Nome, Brevig Mission, and Savoonga to further explore the importance of the arts to the artists and their communities. Artists who participated in the interviews and focus groups described their primary art forms as beading, carving, basketry, sewing, writing, painting, and dancing. Participants included Yup'ik, Inupiaq, and St. Lawerence Island Yupik people and ranged in age from teen-aged to elderhood. Their artistry skill levels spanned from newly-starting artist to master artist. Topics explored included artist skill levels, disciplines, and the experience of art creation; economic considerations related to the arts; connections among art, community, culture and subsistence; among other areas of discussion. Sandhill Culture Craft conducted and analyzed the ethnographic, semi-structured interviews and focus groups.

McDowell Group interpreted the results and developed this report.





Beach grass basket, Pauline Klementson (Yupik)



Beaded fox tail earrings, Teresa Trigg (Inupiaq)

Art Creation

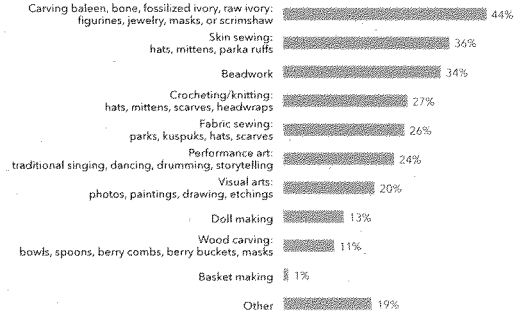
BERING STRAIT ARTISTS create a wide range of artwork from carving of baleen, bone and ivory to beading, skin sewing, and performance art. Many artists practice several art forms. The most common form of artwork practiced in the region is carving, including baleen, bone, fossilized ivory or raw ivory. Approximately one-third of artists create skin sewing art and/or beadwork. About a quarter of artists who responded to the survey create crocheted/knitted art, fabric sewing, and/or performance art such as traditional dance, singing and storytelling (27, 26, and 24 percent).

More than half of survey respondents work on their art several times a week (29 percent almost every day, 23 percent a few times a week).

Calfskin kammaks (boots), Wilfred Topkok



WHAT TYPE(S) OF ARTS AND CRAFTS DO YOU CREATE?



ART CREATION

LEARNING AND SKILL

Artists of all skill levels—emerging, practicing, professional, and master—live and create work in the Bering Strait region.

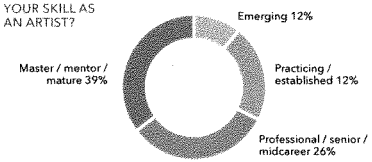
The journey from emerging to master artist takes time and relies on connections to place, people and traditional knowledge. Opportunities to learn emerge from artists' connections to the land through subsistence, their social networks of various types (such as family members and mentors), and cultural memory. As artists develop their skills, they often strengthen those very connections through their work. Many participants described learning their craft at a young age, emphasized the importance of young people learning about art, and spoke of their commitment to mentoring younger artists.

Of artists who responded to the survey, the majority described themselves as master artists with approximately 10-15 years or more of experience (39 percent). About a quarter of respondents described themselves as either practicing/establishing artists with approximately 3-5 years of experience (24 percent) or professional artists with between 5-10 years of experience (26 percent). Twelve percent of artists are emerging artists, new learners with less than three years of experience.

"[**TEACHING** and learning art] is the same process as when you have young kids go hunting... They don't know what to do, but they'll watch, and next time they'll help out, and if you ask them to hold this and that they'll start taking part in it, they'll learn."

"**I HELPED** my grandfather make some of those pieces [carvings]... I studied his techniques...that was a fairly exciting time of my life."

HOW DO YOU CLASSIFY YOUR SKILL AS AN ARTIST?



ART CREATION

MATERIALS

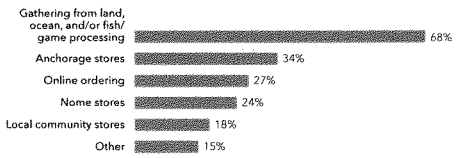
Bering Strait artists use a variety of natural and synthetic materials to create their work.

Materials are often shared, gifted, or purchased among artists. Participants described donating ivory to carvers in need of material and receiving beads from friends passing through.

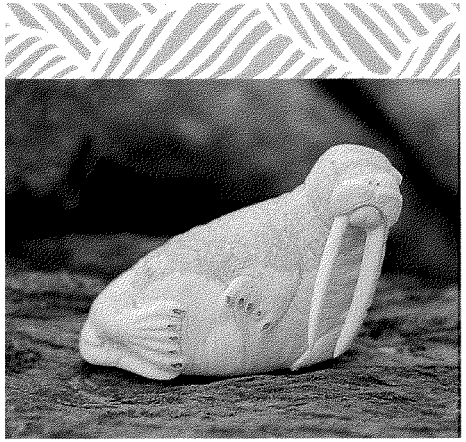
Artistic material is often closely connected with subsistence activities or the broader environment. For example, some artists described how the changing climate affects art by limiting the availability of subsistence-based resources for creating art and by putting pressure on artists to earn more from their work to offset a more limited food supply.

Many gather local materials from the land, ocean, and/or fish/game processing (68 percent). Artists also reported purchasing materials from stores in Anchorage (34 percent), stores in Nome (24 percent), and their community store (18 percent). Over a quarter of responding artists purchase materials online from various retailers (27 percent).

WHERE DO YOU NORMALLY ACCESS MATERIALS?







Ivory walrus, Benjamin Pungowiyi (St. Lawrence Island Yupik)

IVORY BAN

Knowledge and concern about ivory bans varied. Well over half of artists who completed the survey are aware that some states in the Lower 48 are banning the sale of ivory (63 percent). Forty-five percent of responding artists have noticed a decrease in the sale of items made of raw or fossilized ivory during the last year; 37 percent had not. Focus group and interview participants generally opposed bans that would affect Alaska Native artist use of mammoth or walrus ivory.

"OUT ON MY FIRST HUNT, when I was like 12 years old, I got into a walrus hunting party... those were my first sightings of animals which I carved... I got the techniques of butchering the animals, and as I did, I closely examined the animals for their details."

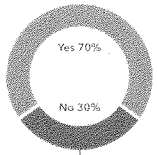
ART CREATION

SPACE

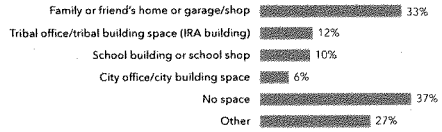
During focus groups and interviews, artists suggested that establishing dedicated arts-and-crafts workplaces in communities would not only solve logistical issues (such as ventilating carving dust) but also provide opportunities for interaction among artists.

Most artists who responded to the survey have a dedicated space at home to work on art (70 percent). Of the remaining 30 percent who do not have a space at home, a third work in a family or friend's home or garage/shop (33 percent) or some other space (27 percent). Thirty-seven percent of artists who said they did not have a space at home, do not have a workspace in the community either.

DO YOU HAVE SPACE AT HOME SPECIFICALLY TO WORK ON YOUR ART/CRAFT?



IF "NO," DO YOU HAVE A WORKSPACE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?



Financial Importance of Art

Artwork matters financially to artists, whether as a primary source of income or, more commonly, as supplemental income. Art can provide money throughout the year, including when jobs are limited or subsistence resources are not as plentiful due to the season and the changing climate. For many artists, selling artwork provides supplemental income that helps pay bills, fund subsistence activities, provide cash in an emergency, and support other family needs such as sports-related travel or college tuition. Artists also barter their work for other goods or donate their art to those in need. Many artists would create art even if their work did not generate income, largely because of the well-being and purpose experienced through their work.

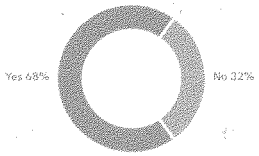


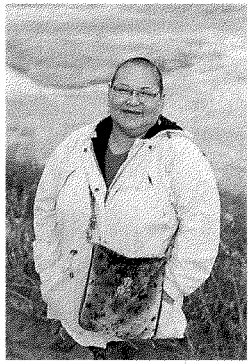
Baleen basket, MaryJane Litchard (Inupiaq)

INCOME

Artists who responded to the survey reported an average household income of $28,000 in 2017, before taxes. A third of artists reported earning less than $5,000 in 2017 (33 percent); 79 percent of surveyed artists report household incomes under $50,000.

DO YOU SELL ANY OF YOUR ART/ CRAFTS AS A WAY TO SUPPLEMENT YOUR MONTHLY INCOME?





Caroline Brown (Inupiaq)

"[WHEN SELLING in the village] I usually sell my stuff to the teachers or some local people that like them too, but I always have to give a low price for the local people because they don't have as much money as others; some people like them, and I don't mind, and it will help me too, but it also will kind of hurt me because it's kind of like half-price. I usually send my stuff out to Nome ... it's kind of hard to sell here in the village."



FINANCIAL IMPORTANCE

SELLING ART

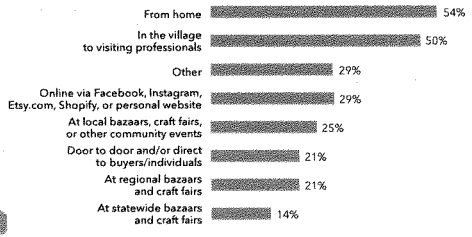
Over two thirds of artists who responded to the survey sell their art or craft to supplement monthly income (68 percent). Of these, half sell art/crafts from their homes (54 percent) and to visiting professionals in the village (50 percent). Nearly a third of artists who sell their work, sell art/crafts online via Facebook, Instagram, Etsy, Shopify, or a personal website (29 percent).

Just over one third of artists report traveling outside of their home community to sell work (34 percent) spending an average of $829 on travel expenses. Most artists, however, do not report traveling to sell their art/crafts (66 percent). Of artists who travel, half go out of the region (52 percent); 41 percent remain in the region, traveling to Nome and surrounding villages; and over a third travel both in and out of the region (34 percent). Very few artists have ever applied for loans or grants to supplement their artistic work (only 4 percent).

HOW OFTEN DO YOU BARTER AND/OR TRADE YOUR ART/CRAFTS?

Never	32%
Rarely	29%
Sometimes	29%
Often	7%
All of the time	2%

WHERE DO YOU SELL MOST OF YOUR ART/CRAFTS?





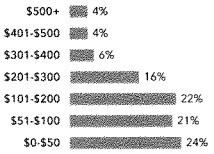
FINANCIAL IMPORTANCE

PRICING ART

Pricing artwork is not clear-cut. When selling art locally, artists often sell at reduced prices. During focus groups and interviews, artists noted what is often a large and frustrating gap between what they receive for their work and what art resellers earn. The cost of shipping work to sellers can further limit earnings. One artist described learning to balance the creation of large, more expensive pieces with smaller, less expensive works which sell more quickly, as well as learning which pieces sell best in different locations.

Of artists who report selling their work, the price of individual pieces ranged from $144 to $463, on average. About one quarter of artists report their average price per piece is between $0 and $50 (24 percent). Twenty-five percent of artists reported that their most expensive piece sold in the last 12 months was over $500. Artists desire training on pricing art, working with galleries, and marketing, among other topics. Training, coupled with access to online markets, can ensure competitive and accurate value for Indigenous art.

WHAT IS THE AVERAGE PRICE OF EACH ITEM THAT YOU SELL?



WHICH TYPES OF BUSINESS TRAINING WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN?

Pricing your artwork	41%
How to work with galleries/art shows to display your work	31%
How to teach your art/craft to other people	31%
Social media marketing	22%
Incorporating Native values into your business practices	22%
Methods of tracking and communicating with buyers/clients	21%
How to set up Paypal or use Square, for instant electronic payments	20%
Preparing for and displaying at art shows	20%
Advertising (postcards, brochures, business cards, etc.)	18%
How to become certified through the Silver Hand Program	18%
How to develop a business plan	18%
How to develop a digital portfolio of your work	18%
How to do your taxes for your art sales	14%
Basic computer and social media skills	14%
Logo/brand development	13%
How to acquire a business license	13%
Other	3%

FINANCIAL IMPORTANCE

MARKETING ART

While most artists who responded to the survey feel satisfied with available opportunities to distribute or sell arts/crafts (69 percent), just under a third do not (31 percent). Thirty-eight percent of responding artists have not had formal or informal business training. Those who have primarily learned from friends or family (38 percent), other artists (30), or Elders (26 percent). Survey results showed that Bering Strait artists would be interested in a variety of training types, the most popular being 'pricing your artwork' (41 percent), 'how to work with galleries/art shows to display your work' (31 percent), and 'how to teach your art/craft to other people' (31 percent).



Frank Miller artwork. PHOTO BY KATIE MILLER

FINANCIAL IMPORTANCE

ALASKA ARTS ECONOMY

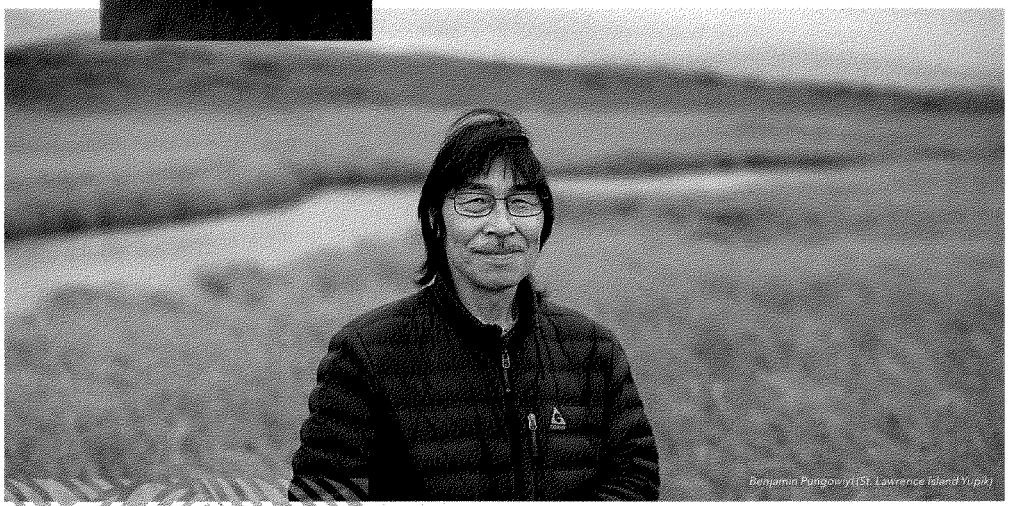
The arts play a broad and significant role in Alaska's economy—benefiting not only the artists who create and sell their work, but also Alaskans who purchase, retail, promote, teach and volunteer for the arts—locally in the Bering Strait region and throughout the state. Half of Alaska households consider the arts important to the economy, and 60 percent of Alaska households consider art important for quality of life.

Nationally, the non-profit arts sector generated $166.3 billion in economic activity and supported 4.6 million jobs in 2015. In 2001, the most recent statewide analysis completed, an estimated 4,500 Alaskans, approximately 2 percent of the workforce, earned income from arts-related activity. In terms of people directly employed, the arts sector was larger than Alaska's mining, residential construction, and banking sectors. In 2001, Alaska artists earned an estimated $20 million. Total employment in the arts sector, including arts organizations and sellers, accounted for approximately $40 million in annual income to Alaskans in 2001. Indirect economic impact from the arts industry supported an additional 600 jobs and $16 million in earnings in 2001.



Connections to People, Place and Time

Creation of art/crafts matters to artists financially, culturally, physically, psychologically, and in terms of artists' connections to the cosmos and environment. It is a whole body, whole spirit, and whole person endeavor.



Benjamin Pungowiyi (St. Lawrence Island Yupik)

CONNECTIONS

WELLNESS AND PURPOSE

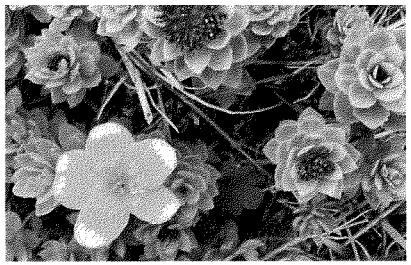
Art supports the physical, mental and spiritual wellness of artists. Craft work is time-intensive and, often, physically demanding. The practice of creating art teaches patience and resilience, for example, when an artist must fix a piece that breaks or learns a new skill. Art creation can reduce stress, clear the mind and promote a sense of peace. Many artists derive a deep sense of satisfaction from their pieces. Artwork is an avenue of spiritual connection for many artists, an opening to receive from and connect with the spiritual realm.

"**[MAKING ARTWORK]** eases my mind because I cancel all my stress, [...] it just cleans your mind."

"**AFTER I DANCE**, my heart, my spirit is really uplifted, like all my worries and fears and whatever go away. It's a really good healing thing."

"**WHEN I STARTED**, I used to be kind of tense, but as time went by, I learned to control my mind and my body, to take my time, rather than try to rush."

"**I HAD TO LEARN** the hard way how to pick grasses. My mom made me stay out the whole day, I remember, until I got it right. I had to look at - all the grasses, they look the same, when they die they all look the same. I had to sit there and figure out which was from last year, the day before, the year after, and this year's grass. That's how she taught me how to learn grass. And it was hard. And she knew the difference; I didn't. It was the feeling of each grass, from hard to soft. That's how I learned, to touch the grass."



"**I'M GETTING INTO** more of an ancient style [...] my thought was to represent our ancestors to keep that art visible to the world before it disappears [...] so the next generation could pick up on it."



Silver fox tail crossing necklace
Sterling silver



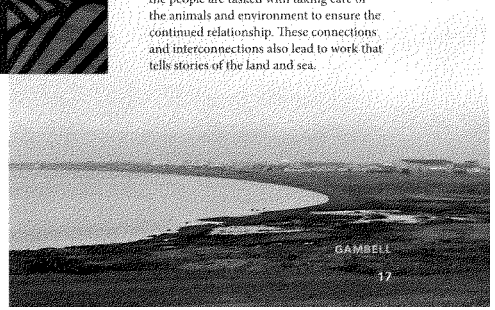
TRAIL TO SERPENTINE HOT SPRINGS

"**[W]HEN YOU REPRESENT** what came from this region, and it's showing the rest of the world what it's like up here, it kind of gives me a [...] push to do more artwork."

CONNECTIONS

PLACE

In the Bering Strait Region, creation of art is intimately connected to the place. The ancestral lands and waters provide connection, inspiration, and materials for work. Artists connect to place through traditional knowledge and practices that provide the framework in which artist can deepen their art experience. In the case of a grass basket maker, through knowledge passed down, the artist knows the types of grasses and reads their age through touch. While picking, the colors of the tundra, animals in the sky and sound of the ocean can come into the art-making experience. Those experiences then weave into her work, or are shared with others to be incorporated into song and other works of art. Art also provides practical items for survival in the extreme weather in the Bering Strait, such as beaded seal skin mittens and fur lined atigis (parkas) crafted and utilized for warmth. These gifts of the animals of the land are essential for the survival of the people, and the people are tasked with taking care of the animals and environment to ensure the continued relationship. These connections and interconnections also lead to work that tells stories of the land and sea.



GAMBELL

17

CONNECTIONS

SUSTAINING CULTURE

Art creation preserves and sustains the living body of traditional knowledge. Art is one of the most important avenues to express culture; its various forms—carving, beading, sewing, dancing—must be lived and practiced to be sustained. Many artists create their work, in part, to pass on their crafts to others and ensure traditions are remembered, by creating art that carries memory and teaching younger generations of artists. Creation of art, for many artists, is closely connected with subsistence practices, whether directly through materials or inspiration from the land.



Ivory figurines, Edwin Noongwook (St. Lawrence Island Yupik)

"TO ME, IT'S ALMOST like a real spiritual thing. Like when I want to carve, when I get a piece of material, and I hold it in my hand, I am just silent with it, and it will speak to me and tell me what it wants to become, and then I'll carve it into that."

SUPPORTING BERING STRAIT ARTISTS

Artists who responded to the survey and who participated in interviews and focus groups provided suggestions to strengthen the practice of traditional arts and crafts forms in the region. Access to materials, space to create work, support for selling art, and educational opportunities to pass on traditional methods were the most frequently mentioned areas of need. Please also see page 5.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD PROVIDE THE MOST HELP TO YOU IN THE CREATION OF YOUR ART/CRAFTS?

Access to materials and resources for creating art	64%
Space to create art	48%
Training or mentoring from other artists	33%
Space to interact or collaborate with other artists	31%
Access to credit and financial assistance	21%
Access to business training	21%
Other	7%

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IN SUPPORTING DISTRIBUTION OR SALE OF YOUR ART/CRAFTS?

Access to physical markets	48%
Access to electronic markets (Facebook Bering Arts & Crafts page, Etsy, etc.)	32%
Computer skills training	29%
Training or mentoring from other artists	29%
Space to interact of collaborate with other artists	22%
Access to business training	19%
Other	9%



THANK YOU

Kawerak, Inc. thanks the following organizations and individuals for their contributions to this document.

All artists and crafters who participated in the survey, focus groups and interviews.

Randall Jones, Isabelle Ryan, and all Tribal Offices that helped distribute and collect surveys.

Artists who agreed to be photographed and have their photos used in the report.

Dartmouth Interns Tia Yazzie and Shelby Fitzpatrick

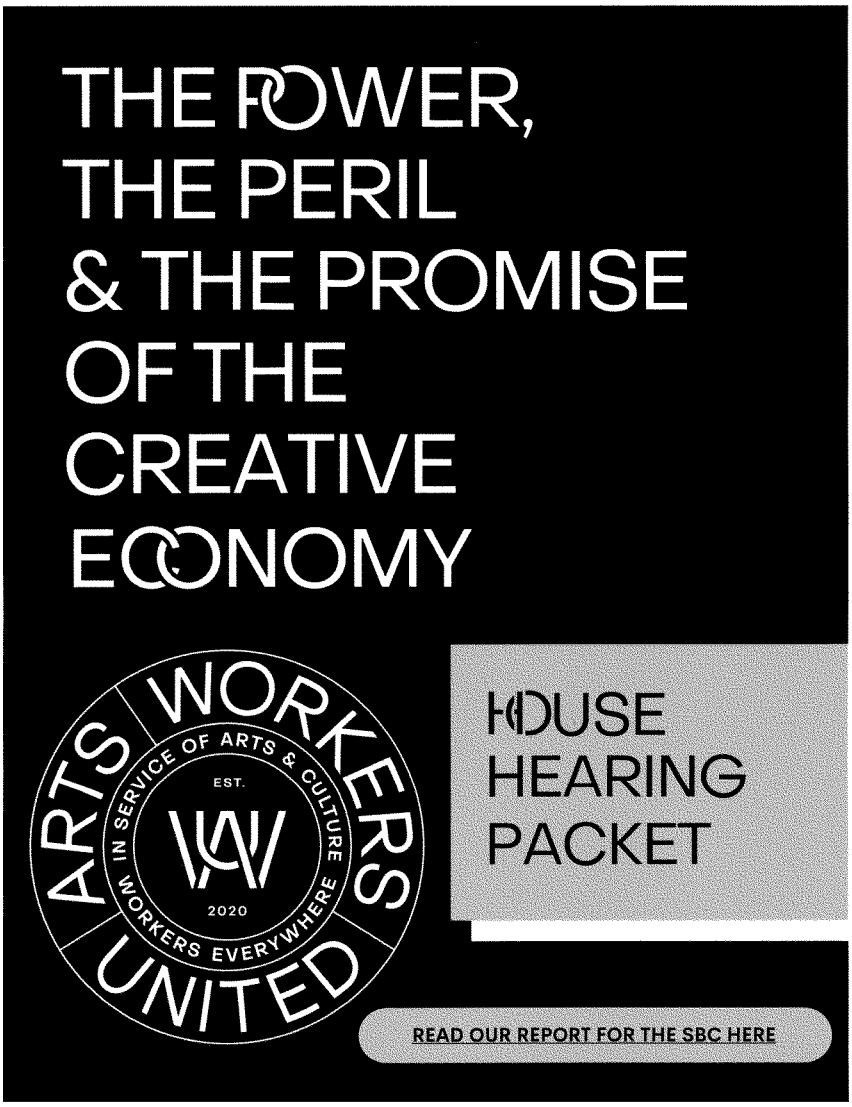
Photos included in this report are from Taylor Booth Photography: Katie Miller, Alice Bioff, Nome; Huda Ivanoff, Unalakleet, and Danielle Slingsby, Nome.

Kawerak, Inc. (Danielle Slingsby, Donna James, Julie Raymond-Yakoubian, Vera Metcalf, Patti Lillie, MaryJane Litchard, Rose Fosdick, Carol Piscoya, Alice Bioff [Project Lead])

McDowell GROUP

First Peoples Fund


Beaded Lead
Sling, Bullets
Terracotta
(Mutina)


THE POWER,
THE PERIL
& THE PROMISE
OF THE
CREATIVE
ECONOMY
ARTS WORKERS UNITED
IN SERVICE OF ARTS & CULTURE
WORKERS EVERYWHERE
EST.
2020
HOUSE
HEARING
PACKET
READ OUR REPORT FOR THE SBC HERE

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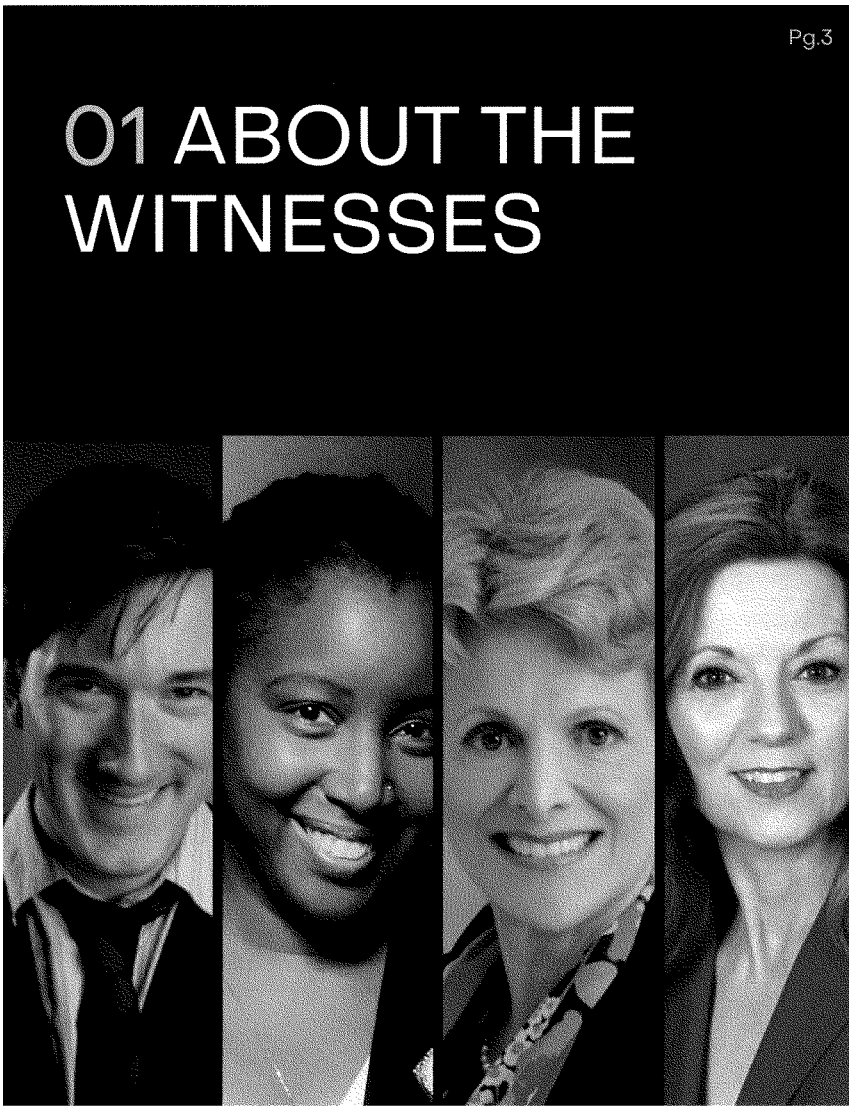
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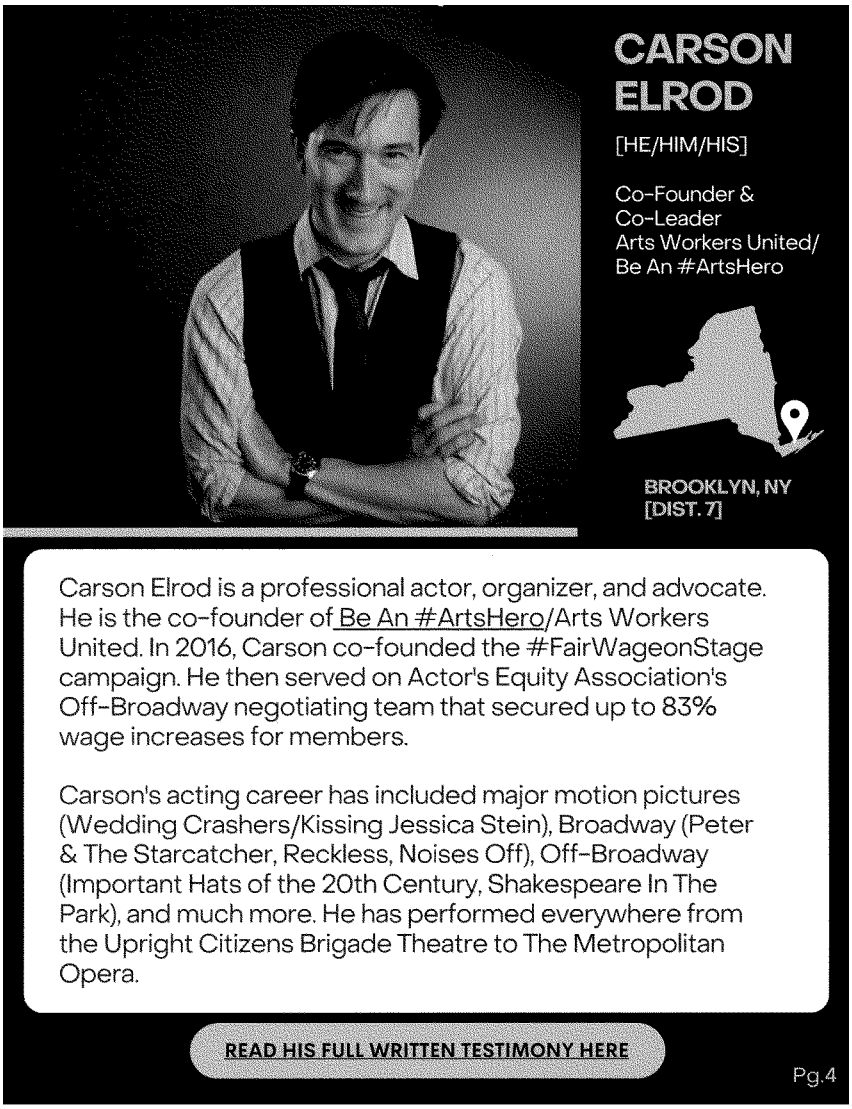
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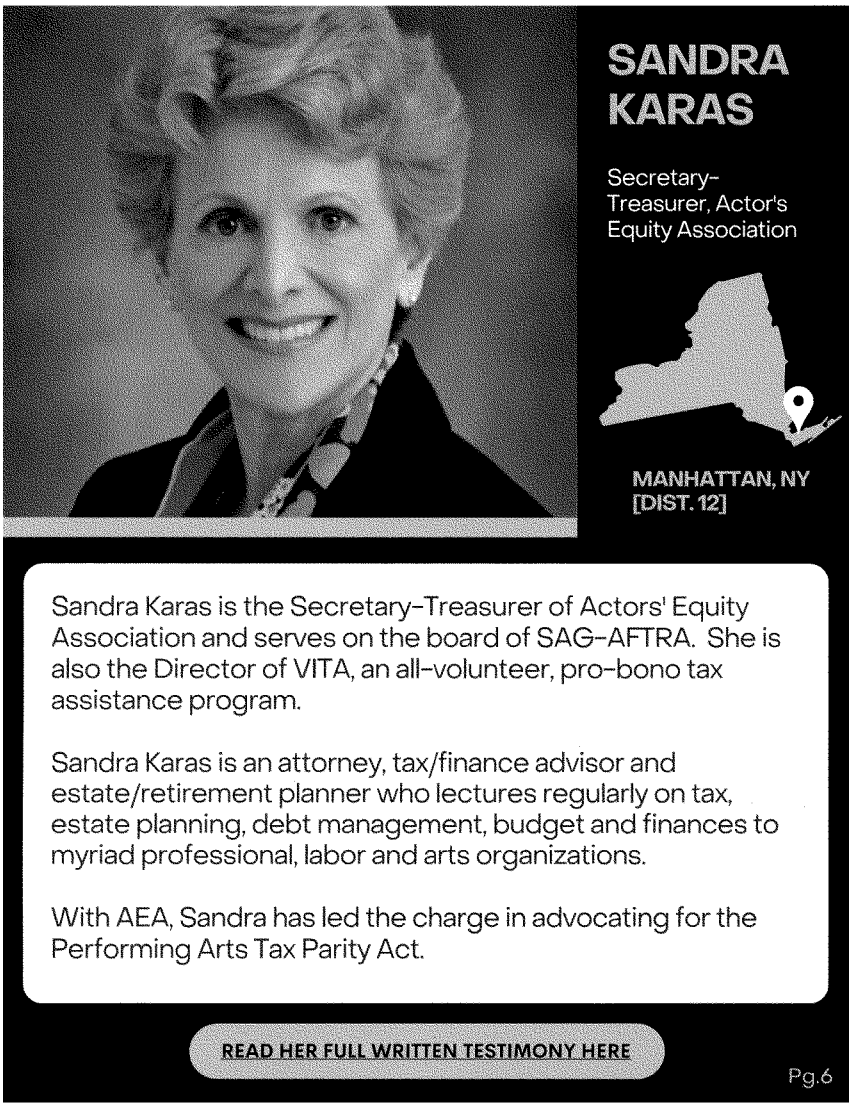
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01 ABOUT THE WITNESSES


CARSON
ELROD
[HE/HIM/HIS]
Co-Founder &
Co-Leader
Arts Workers United/
Be An #ArtsHero
BROOKLYN, NY
[DIST. 7]
Carson Elrod is a professional actor, organizer, and advocate. He is the co-founder of Be An #ArtsHero/Arts Workers United. In 2016, Carson co-founded the #FairWageonStage campaign. He then served on Actor's Equity Association's Off-Broadway negotiating team that secured up to 83% wage increases for members.
Carson's acting career has included major motion pictures (Wedding Crashers/Kissing Jessica Stein), Broadway (Peter & The Starcatcher, Reckless, Noises Off), Off-Broadway (Important Hats of the 20th Century, Shakespeare In The Park), and much more. He has performed everywhere from the Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre to The Metropolitan Opera.
READ HIS FULL WRITTEN TESTIMONY HERE
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NATAKI GARRETT
[SHE/HER/HERS]
Artistic Director, Oregon Shakespeare Festival
ASHLAND, OR [DIST. 2]
Nataki Garrett is the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's sixth artistic director. Only weeks after her appointment, the COVID-19 pandemic forced OSF to close five productions only six days after opening.
Garrett has guided OSF through numerous transitions and crises; during the pandemic, Garrett secured $6 million for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, assisted in securing $8 million for Oregon's performing arts organizations, and $600,000 to organizations doing front-line work with underserved communities impacted by Oregon's fires.
READ HER FULL WRITTEN TESTIMONY HERE
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SANDRA KARAS
Secretary-Treasurer, Actor's Equity Association
MANHATTAN, NY [DIST. 12]
Sandra Karas is the Secretary-Treasurer of Actors' Equity Association and serves on the board of SAG-AFTRA. She is also the Director of VITA, an all-volunteer, pro-bono tax assistance program.
Sandra Karas is an attorney, tax/finance advisor and estate/retirement planner who lectures regularly on tax, estate planning, debt management, budget and finances to myriad professional, labor and arts organizations.
With AEA, Sandra has led the charge in advocating for the Performing Arts Tax Parity Act.
READ HER FULL WRITTEN TESTIMONY HERE
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RAEANNE PRESLEY

Former Mayor, Branson, Missouri and Co-Owner of Presley's Jubilee Theatre



BRANSON, MI [DIST. 2]

Raeanne Presley served four terms as Mayor of Branson, Missouri, and is co-owner of Branson Visitor TV as well as Presley's Country Jubilee Theatre, the first live performance theatre on the Branson strip.

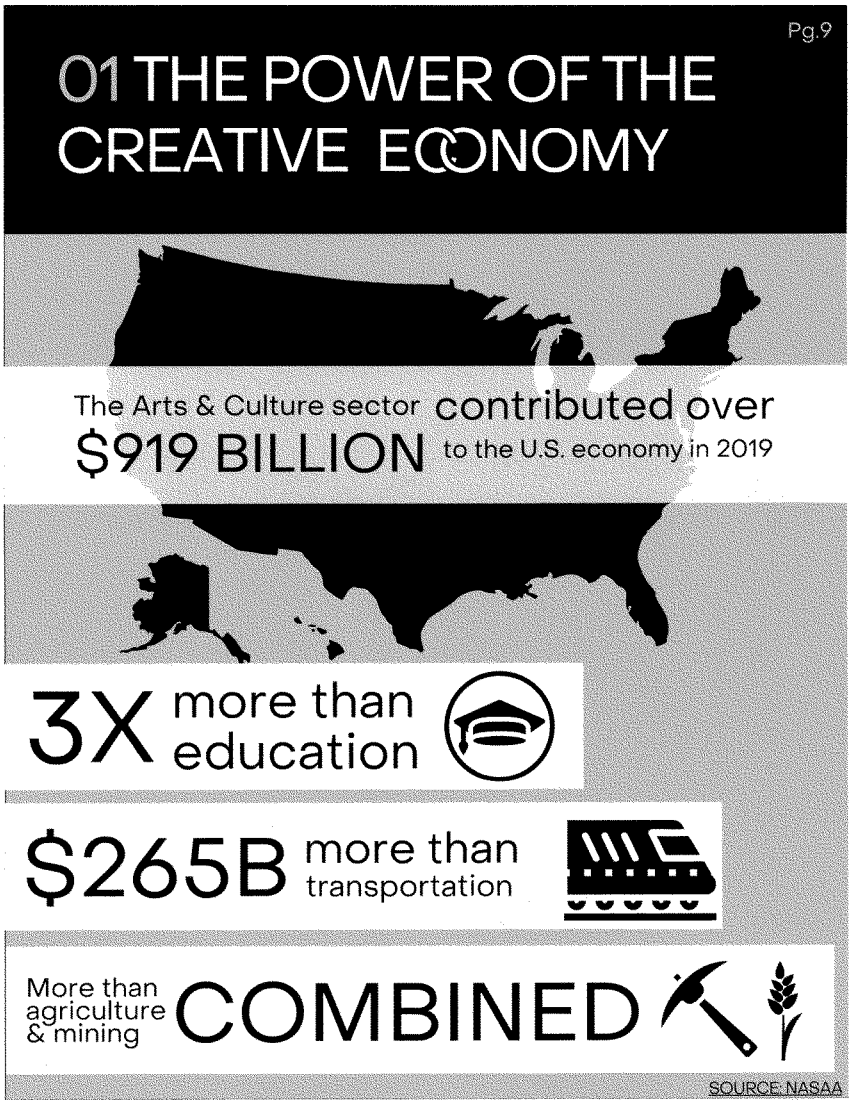
Presley was first elected mayor of Branson in 2007, then re-elected in 2009, 2011, and 2013. She previously served as a Branson City Council Alderman for 10 years. She has also served in leadership positions with the Missouri Tourism Commission, Cox Health Center Branson, Springfield/Branson National Airport, Council of Churches of the Ozarks, Ozarks Technical Community College Foundation, and Community Partnership of the Ozarks.

READ HER FULL WRITTEN TESTIMONY HERE

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01 THE POWER OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY




Pg.9
01 THE POWER OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY
The Arts & Culture sector contributed over
$919 BILLION to the U.S. economy in 2019
3X more than education
$265B more than transportation
More than agriculture & mining COMBINED
SOURCE: NASAA

WE ARE BIG BUSINESS BECAUSE WE ARE LOCAL BUSINESS.



From Boise to Birmingham, our 673,000 businesses anchor highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems that create and sustain retail, restaurants, hospitality, tourism, and transportation. If these businesses collapse, America faces economic catastrophe in every state, city, and rural community.

02 THE POWER OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY



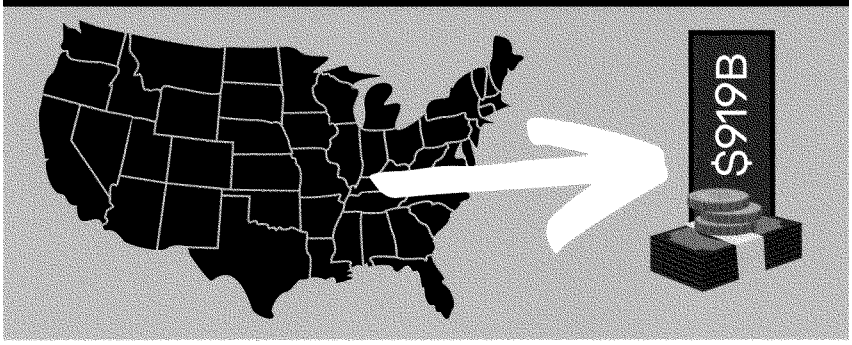
AMERICAN JOBS

Arts Workers and their unique skills are responsible for 4.3% of our GDP.

SOURCE: NASAA

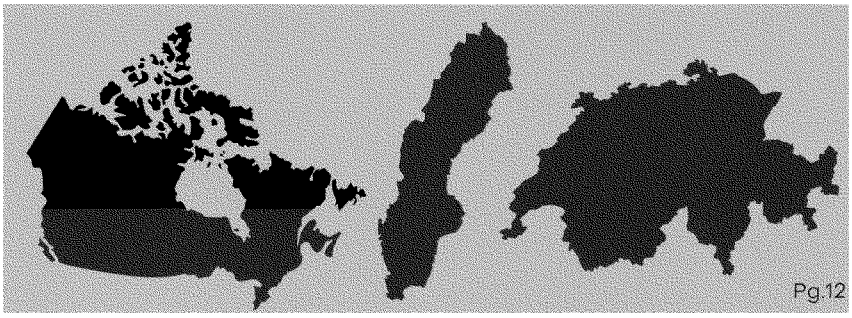
Our 5.2 million Arts & Culture workers drive billions of dollars in household income and tax revenue across the United States.

02 THE POWER OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY



A CREATIVE GIANT

The American Creative Economy is equivalent to nearly half of Canada's total GDP, and bigger than the entire economic output of Sweden and Switzerland. [SOURCE: Bloomberg]



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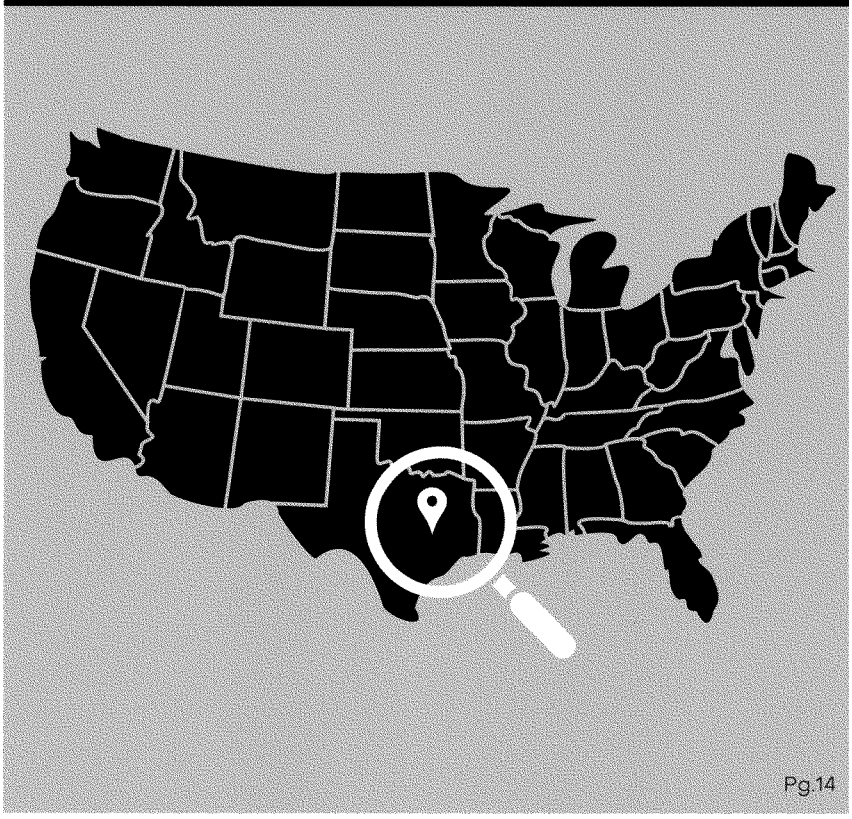
02 THE POWER OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY



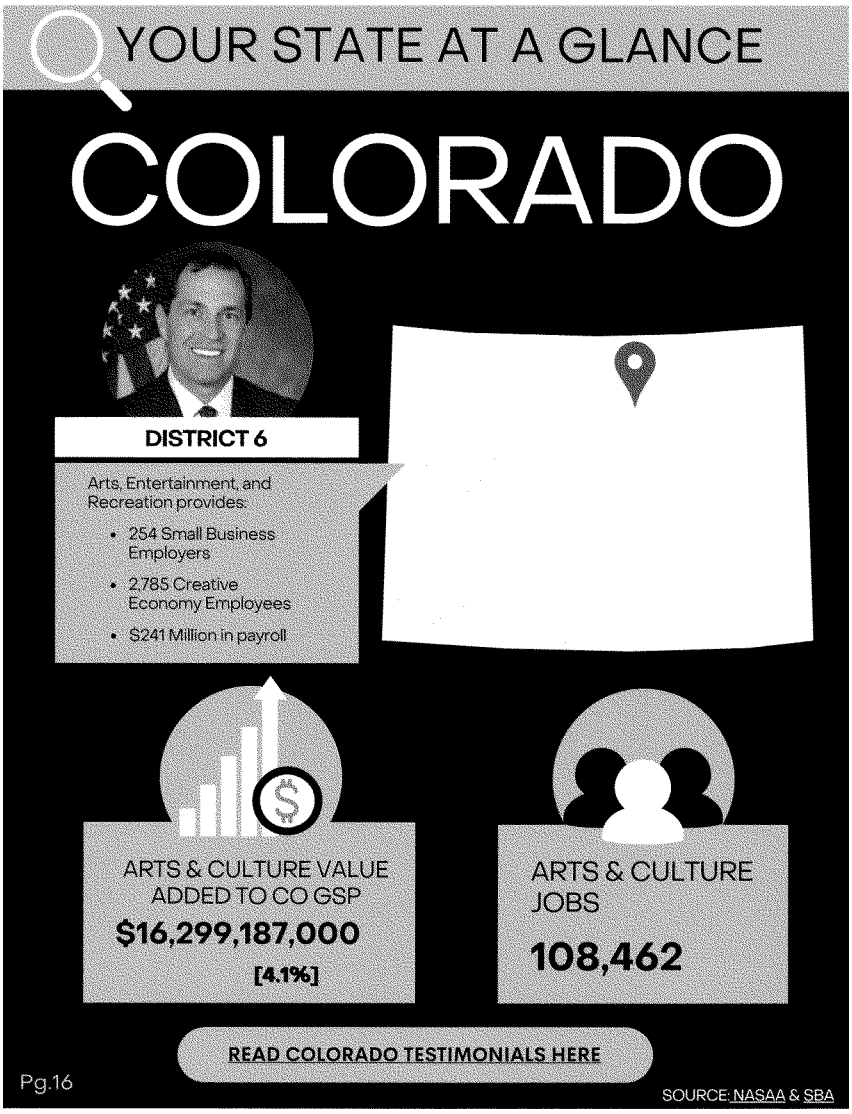
Arts & Culture benefits more than just the economy. Arts & Culture improves efficacy and outcomes to anything it is integrated into, including education, criminal justice, health and transportation. Nearly every aspect of society is improved by adding an Arts & Culture element.

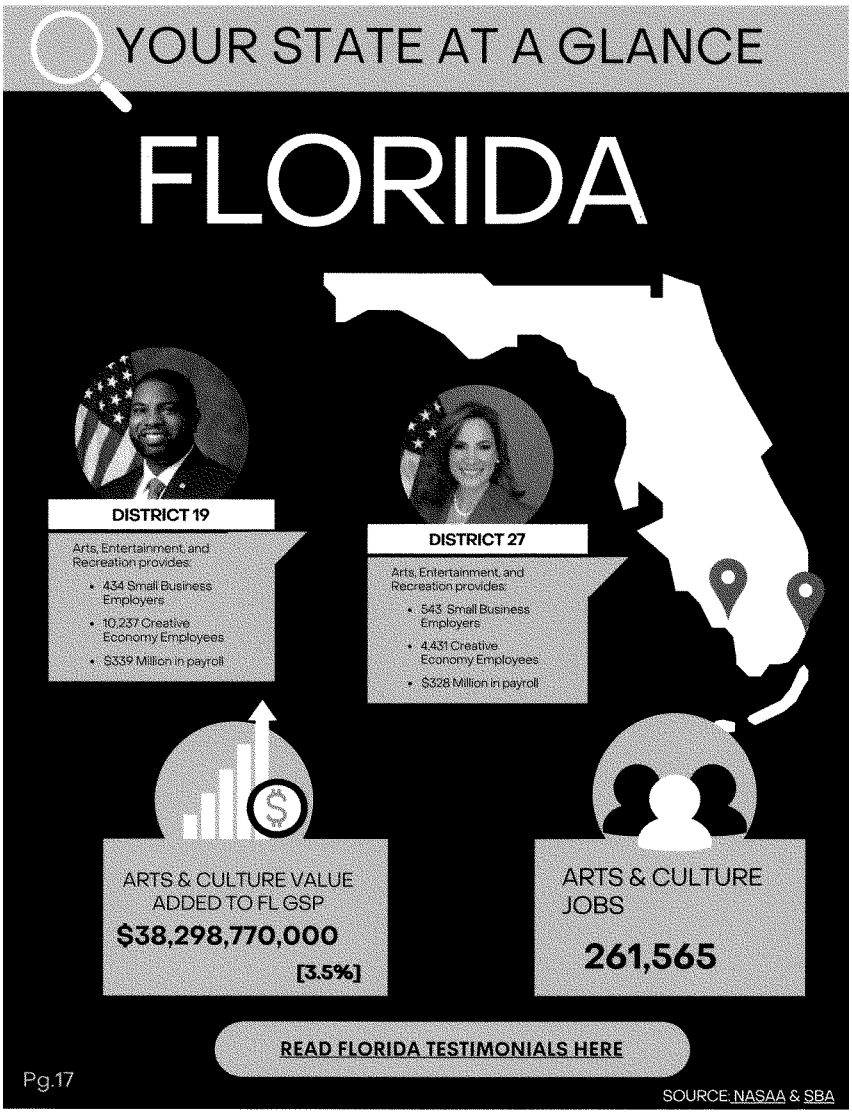
INVESTIGATE AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS' SOCIAL IMPACT WHEEL

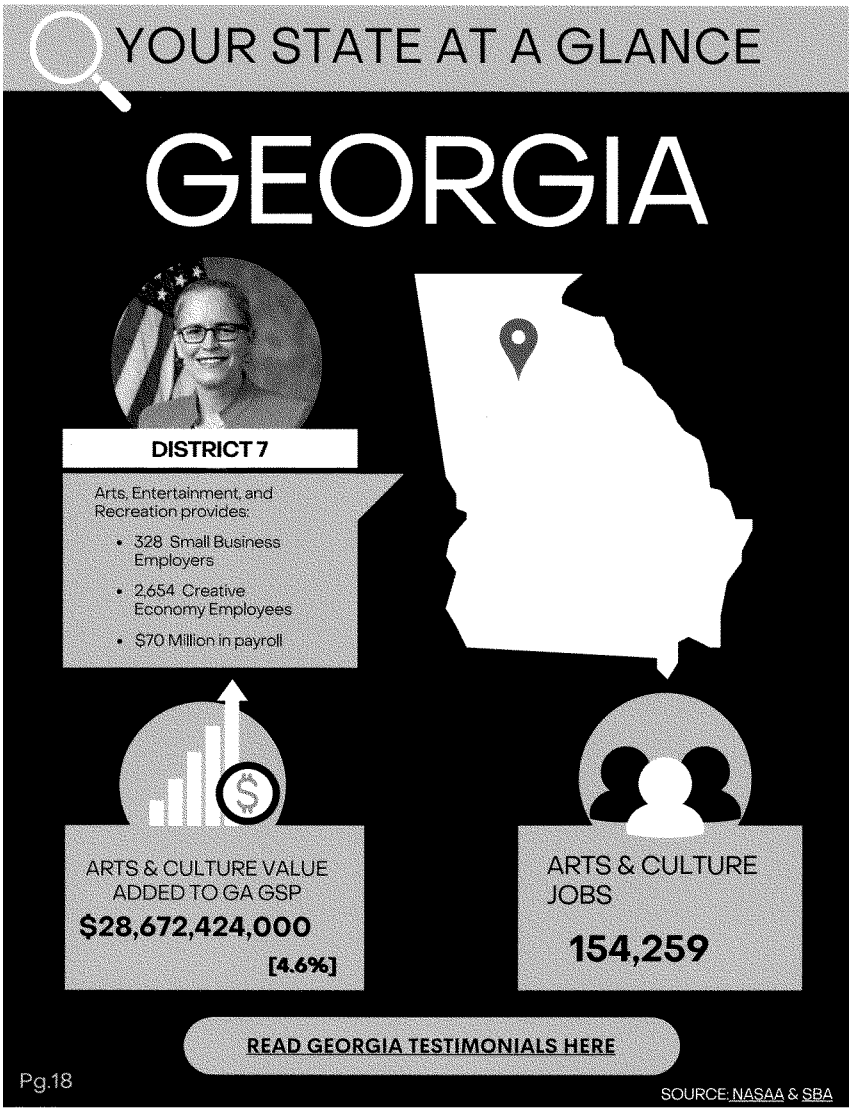
02-A YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE

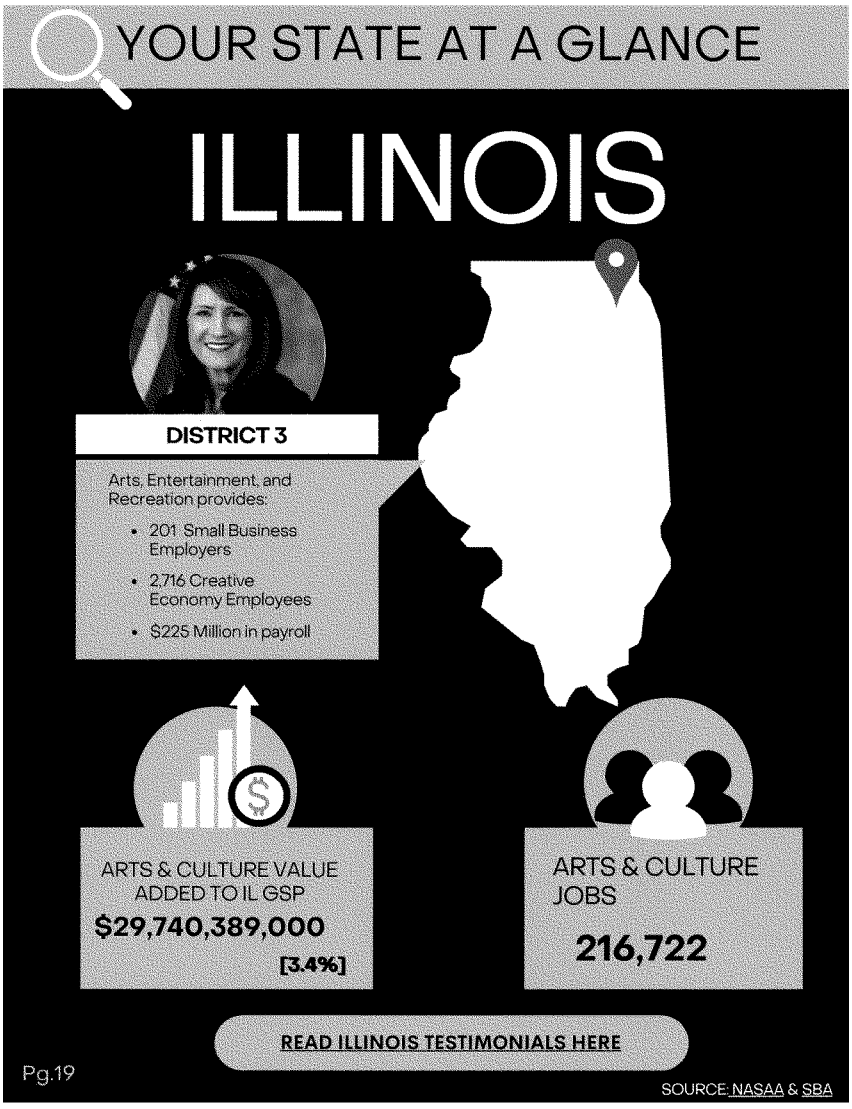



YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
CALIFORNIA
DISTRICT 27
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 563 Small Business Employers
• 4,254 Creative Economy Employees
• $172 Million in payroll
DISTRICT 39
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 204 Small Business Employers
• 2,119 Creative Economy Employees
• $54 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO CA GSP
$232,452,954,000
[7.4%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
779,932
READ CALIFORNIA TESTIMONIALS HERE
Pg.15
SOURCE: NASAA & SBA


YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
COLORADO
DISTRICT 6
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 254 Small Business Employers
• 2,785 Creative Economy Employees
• $241 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO CO GSP
$16,299,187,000
[4.1%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
108,462
READ COLORADO TESTIMONIALS HERE
Pg.16
SOURCE: NASAA & SBA


YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
FLORIDA
DISTRICT 19
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 434 Small Business Employers
• 10,237 Creative Economy Employees
• $339 Million in payroll
DISTRICT 27
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 543 Small Business Employers
• 4,431 Creative Economy Employees
• $328 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO FL GSP
$38,298,770,000
[3.5%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
261,565
READ FLORIDA TESTIMONIALS HERE
Pg.17
SOURCE: NASAA & SBA


YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
GEORGIA
DISTRICT 7
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 328 Small Business Employers
• 2,654 Creative Economy Employees
• $70 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO GA GSP
$28,672,424,000
[4.6%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
154,259
READ GEORGIA TESTIMONIALS HERE
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SOURCE: NASAA & SBA


YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
ILLINOIS
DISTRICT 3
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 201 Small Business Employers
• 2,716 Creative Economy Employees
• $225 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO IL GSP
$29,740,389,000
[3.4%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
216,722
READ ILLINOIS TESTIMONIALS HERE
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SOURCE: NASAA & SBA

YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE

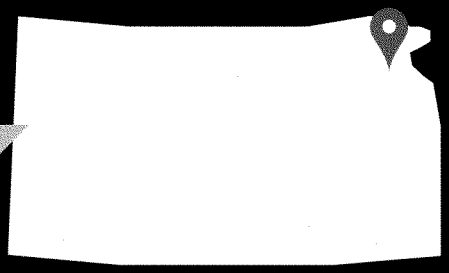
KANSAS



DISTRICT 3

Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:

- 265 Small Business Employers
- 3,772 Creative Economy Employees
- $92 Million in payroll



ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO KS GSP

$4,683,639,000

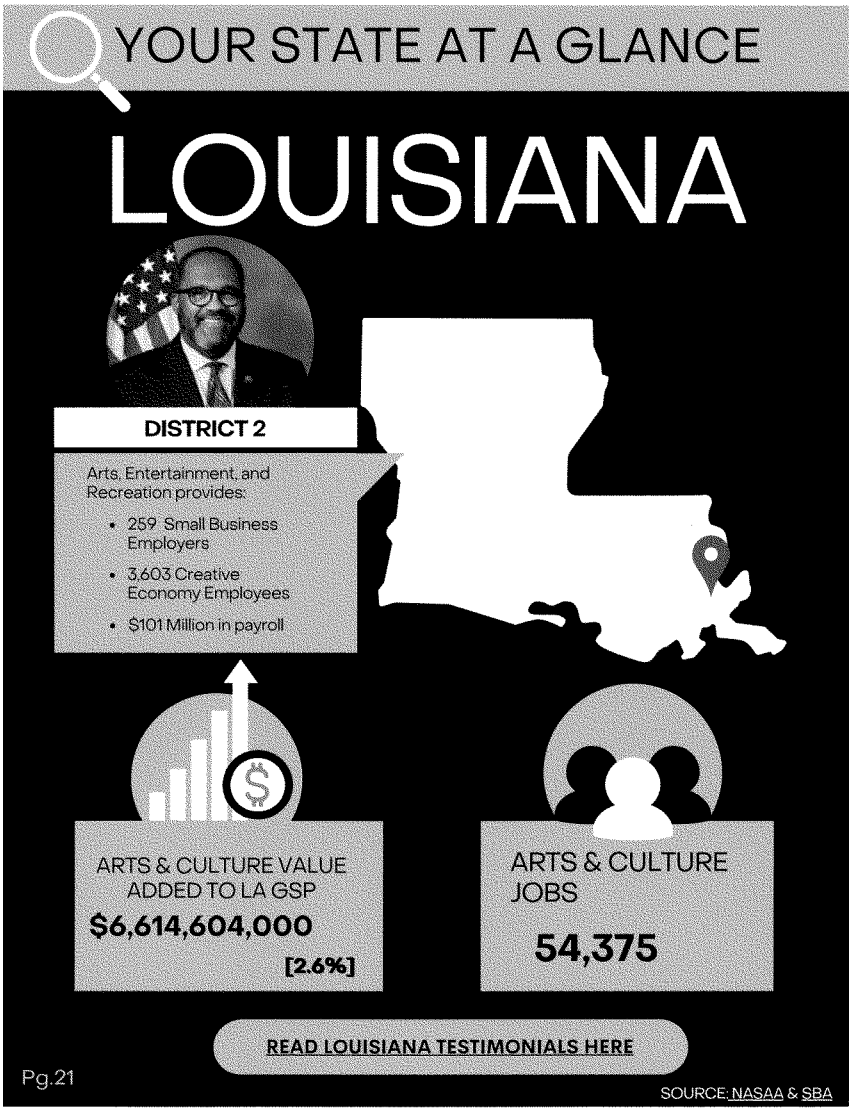
[2.7%]

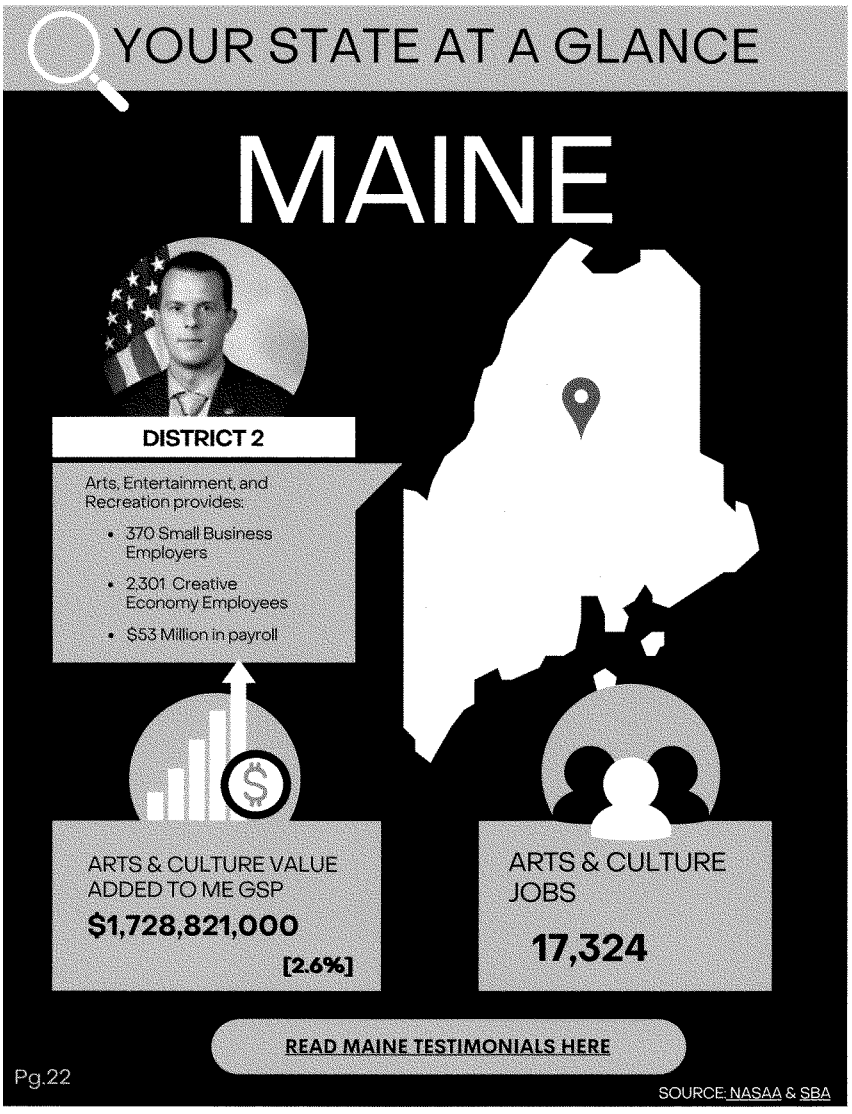
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS

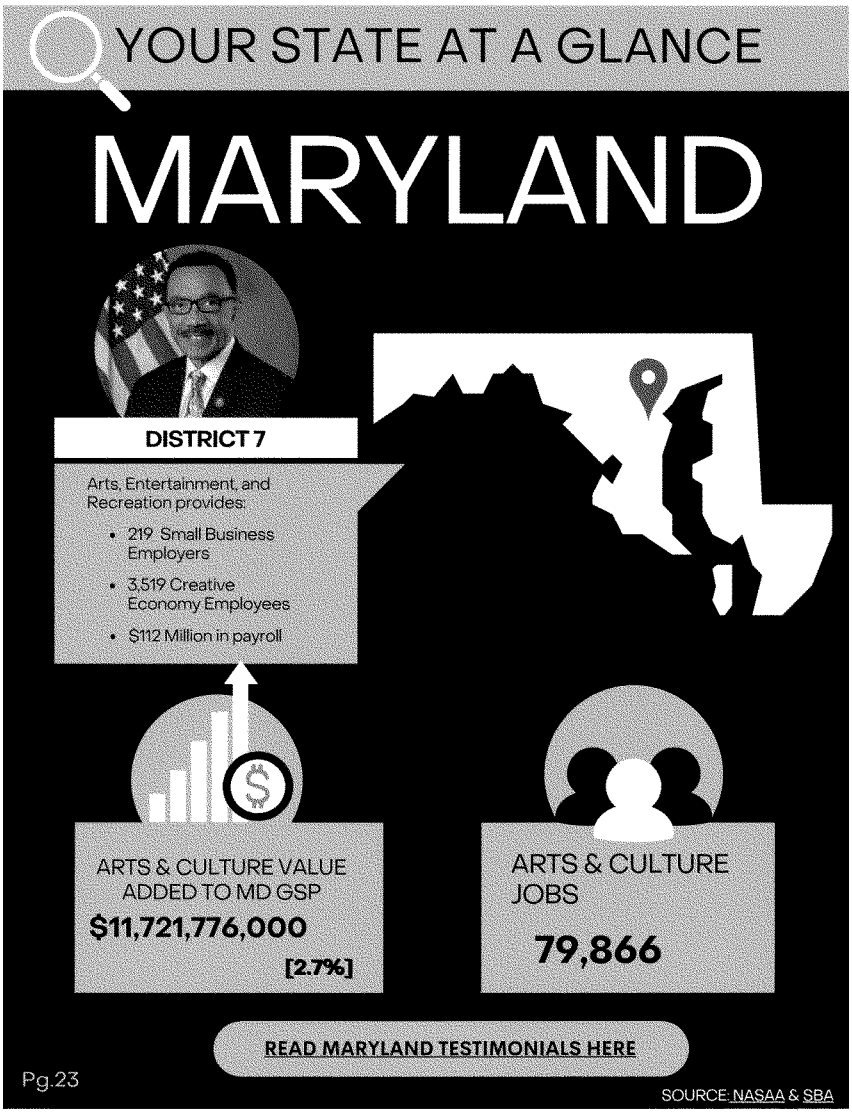
45,663

READ KANSAS TESTIMONIALS HERE

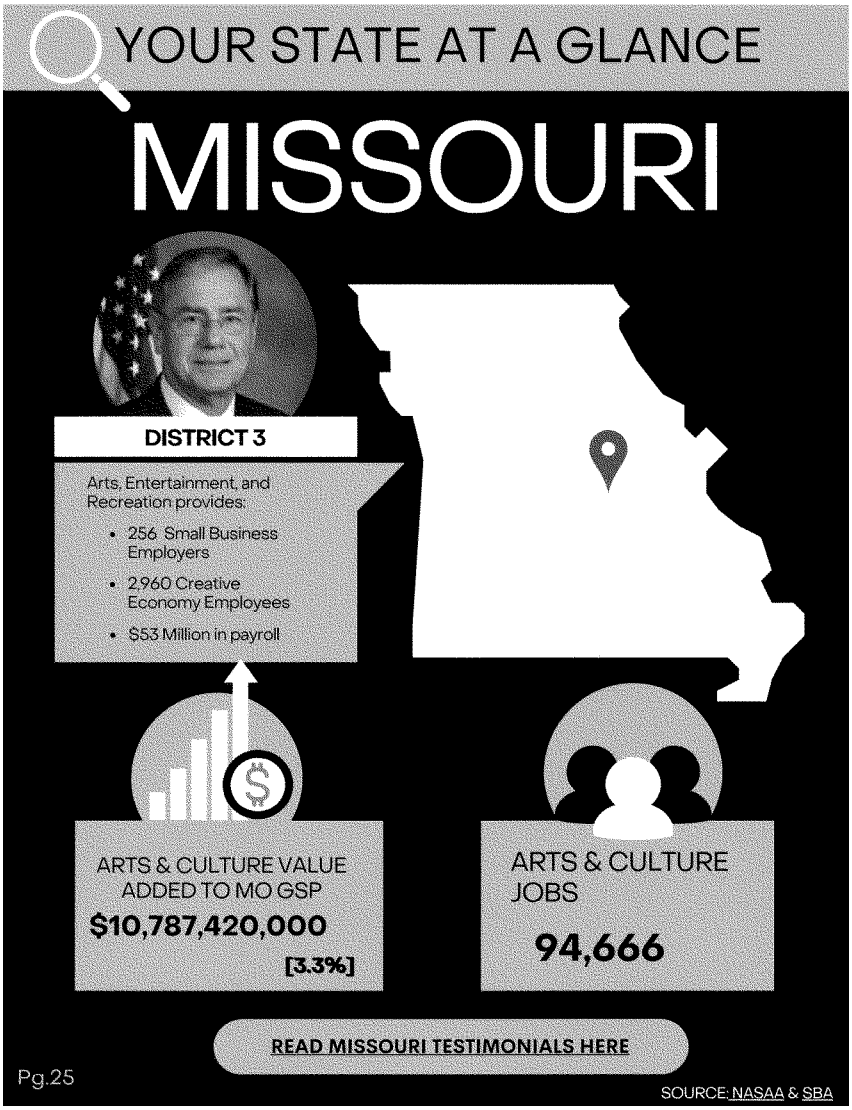
SOURCE: NASAA & SBA

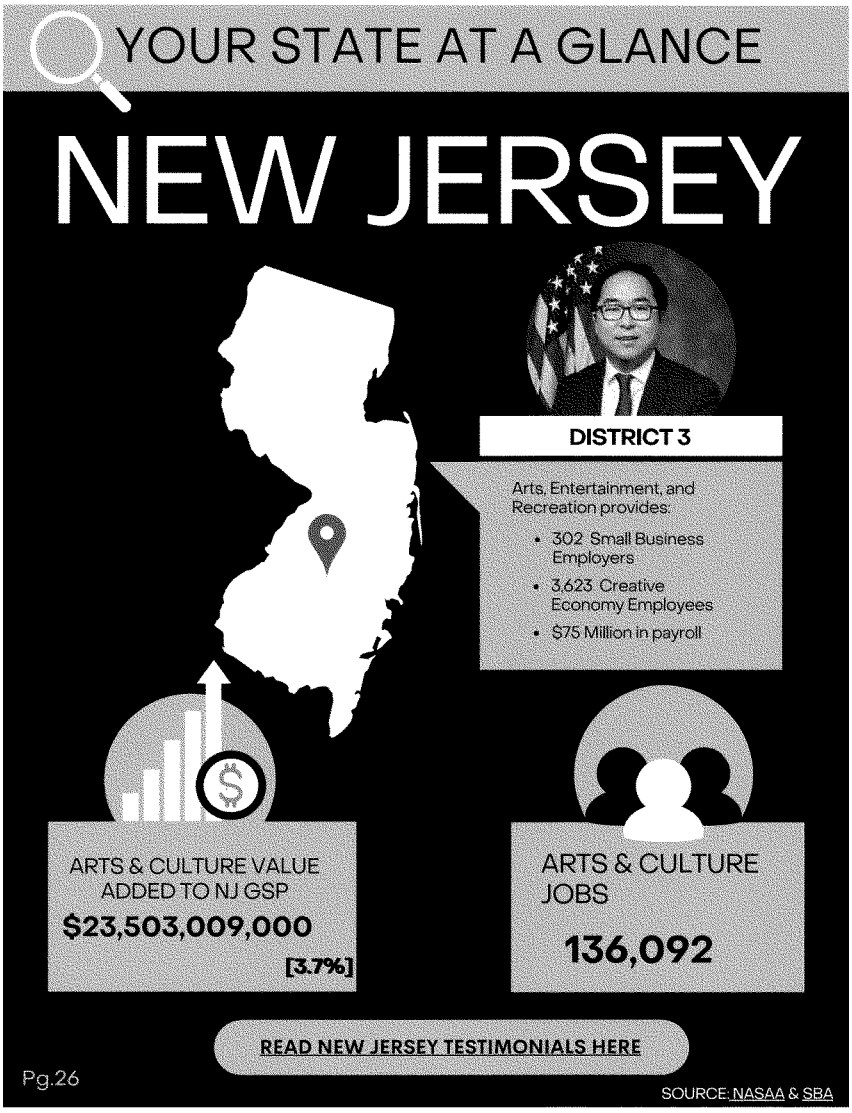

YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
LOUISIANA
DISTRICT 2
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 259 Small Business Employers
• 3,603 Creative Economy Employees
• $101 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO LA GSP
$6,614,604,000
[2.6%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
54,375
READ LOUISIANA TESTIMONIALS HERE
Pg.21
SOURCE: NASAA & SBA


YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
MAINE
DISTRICT 2
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 370 Small Business Employers
• 2,301 Creative Economy Employees
• $53 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO ME GSP
$1,728,821,000
[2.6%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
17,324
READ MAINE TESTIMONIALS HERE
Pg.22
SOURCE: NASAA & SBA

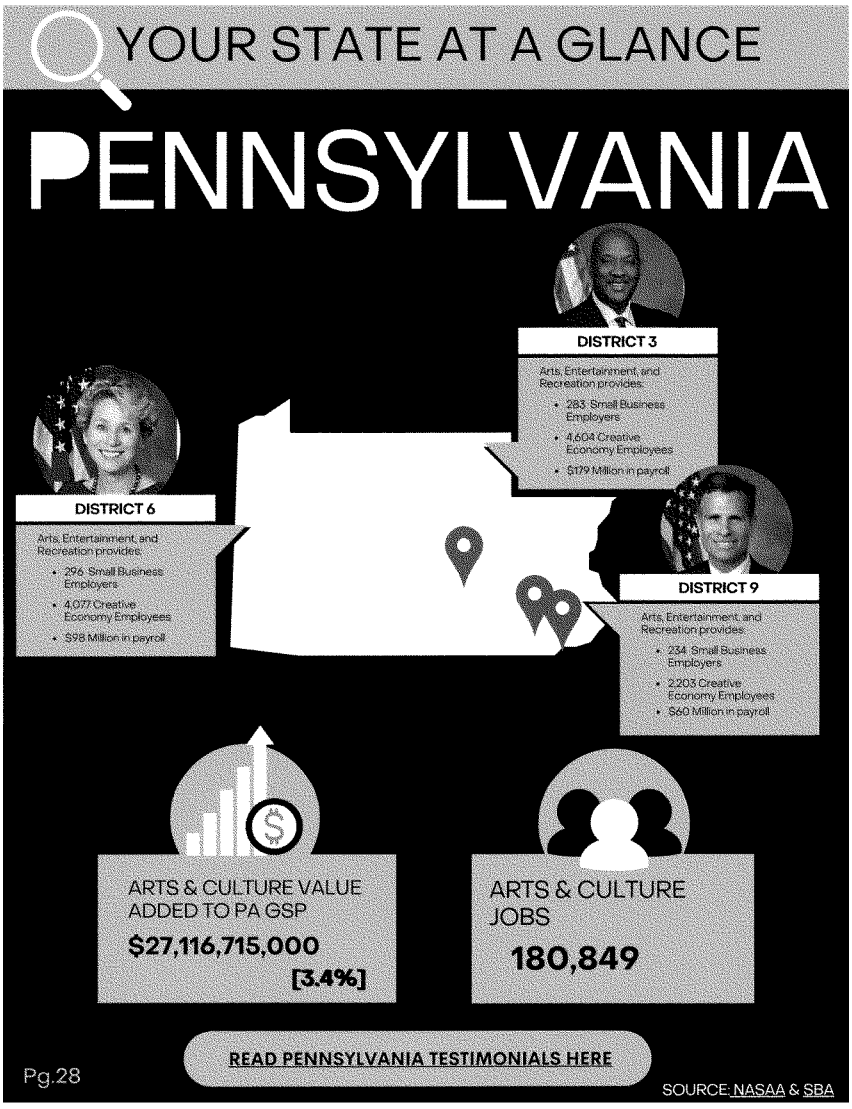

YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
MARYLAND
DISTRICT 7
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 219 Small Business Employers
• 3,519 Creative Economy Employees
• $112 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO MD GSP
$11,721,776,000
[2.7%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
79,866
READ MARYLAND TESTIMONIALS HERE
Pg.23
SOURCE: NASAA & SBA

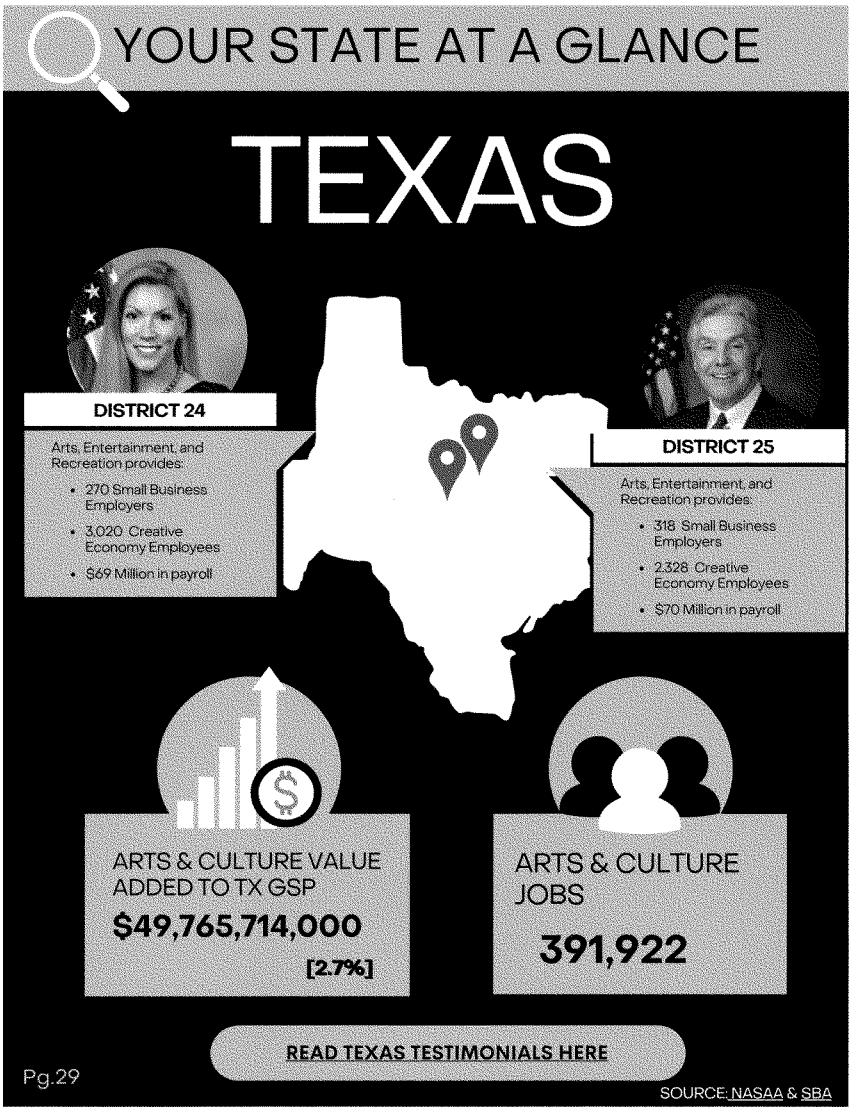

YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
MINNESOTA
DISTRICT 1
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 344 Small Business Employers
• 3,510 Creative Economy Employees
• $53 Million in payroll
DISTRICT 3
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 339 Small Business Employers
• 4,104 Creative Economy Employees
• $100 Million in payroll
DISTRICT 2
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 301 Small Business Employers
• 3,131 Creative Economy Employees
• $57 Million in payroll
DISTRICT 8
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 399 Small Business Employers
• 3,265 Creative Economy Employees
• $59 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO MN GSP
$12,576,602,000
[3.3%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
95,024
READ MINNESOTA TESTIMONIALS HERE
Pg.24
SOURCE: NASAA & SBA

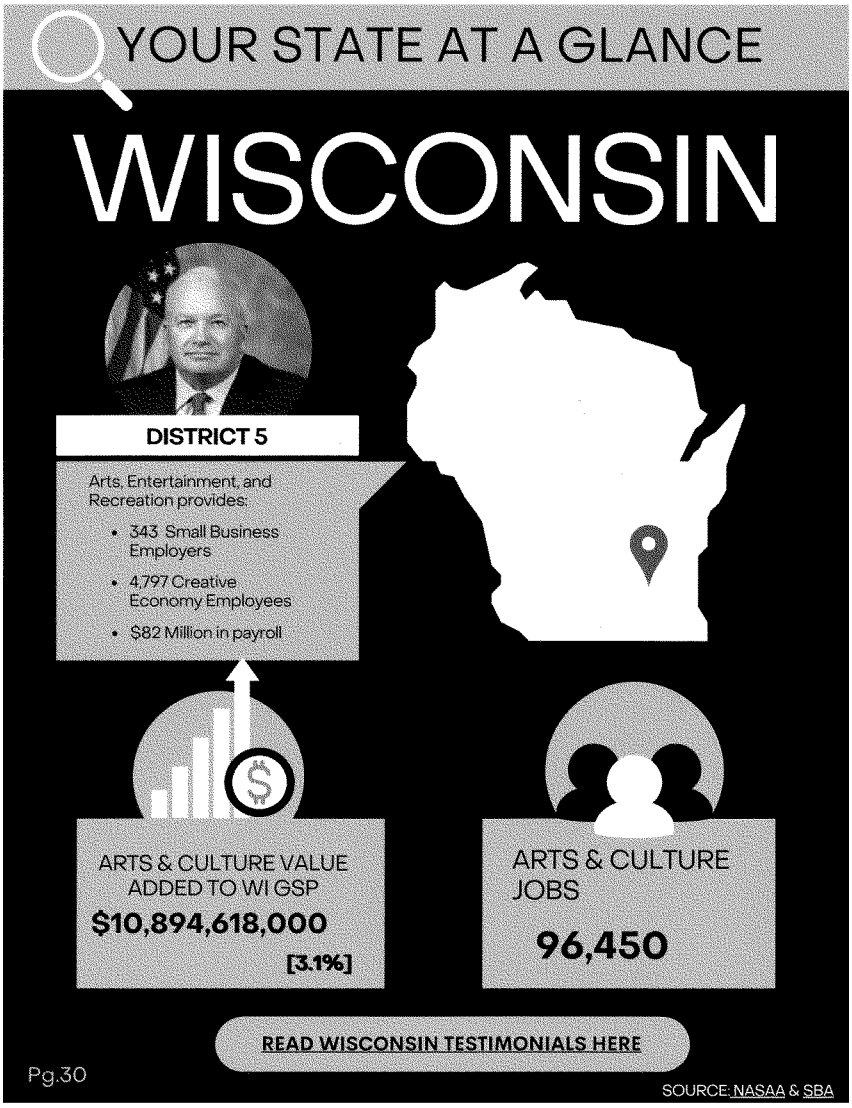

YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
MISSOURI
DISTRICT 3
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 256 Small Business Employers
• 2,960 Creative Economy Employees
• $53 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO MO GSP
$10,787,420,000
[3.3%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
94,666
READ MISSOURI TESTIMONIALS HERE
Pg.25
SOURCE: NASAA & SBA

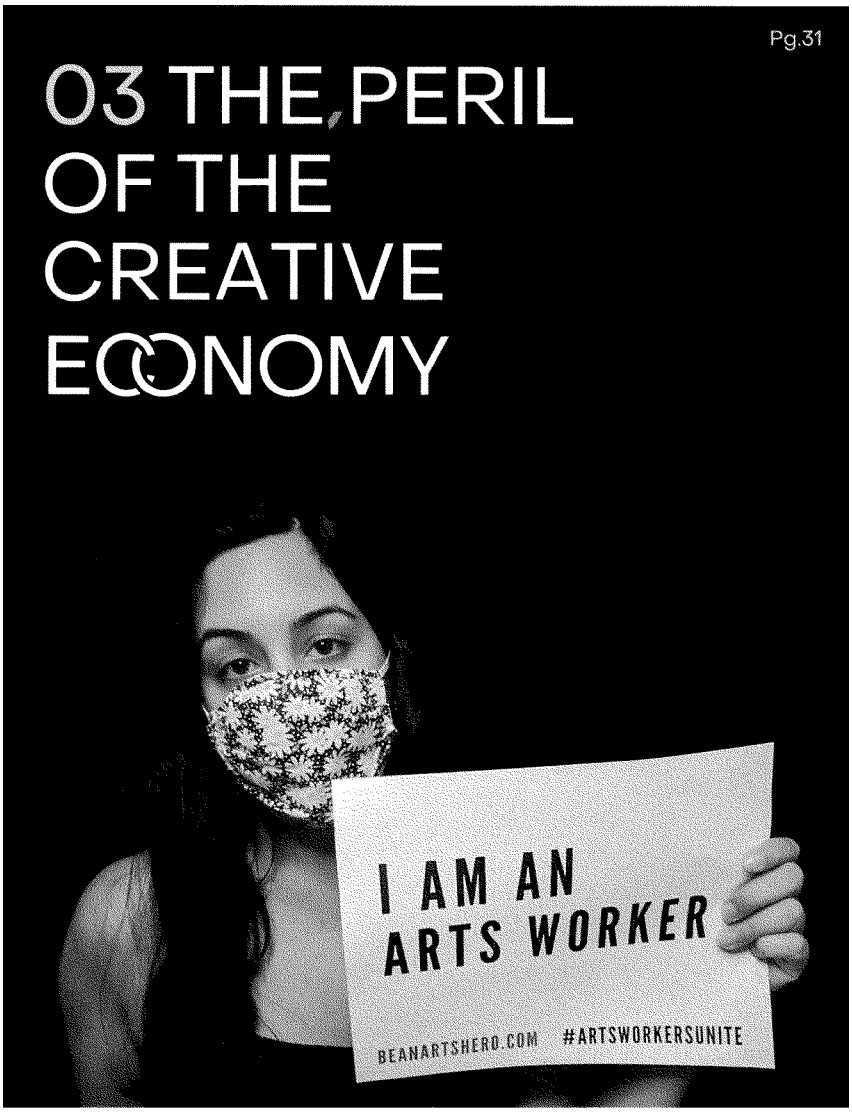

YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
NEW JERSEY
DISTRICT 3
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 302 Small Business Employers
• 3,623 Creative Economy Employees
• $75 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO NJ GSP
$23,503,009,000
[3.7%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
136,092
READ NEW JERSEY TESTIMONIALS HERE
Pg.26
SOURCE: NASAA & SBA


YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
NEW YORK
DISTRICT 2
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 270 Small Business Employers
• 2,481 Creative Economy Employees
• $60 Million in payroll
DISTRICT 19
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 502 Small Business Employers
• 3,730 Creative Economy Employees
• $114 Million in payroll
DISTRICT 22
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 296 Small Business Employers
• 2,331 Creative Economy Employees
• $51 Million in payroll
DISTRICT 7
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 579 Small Business Employers
• 3,348 Creative Economy Employees
• $197 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO NY GSP
$123,216,564,000
[7.0%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
504,393
READ NEW YORK TESTIMONIALS HERE
Pg.27
SOURCE: NASAA & SBA


YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
PENNSYLVANIA
DISTRICT 3
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 283 Small Business Employers
• 4,604 Creative Economy Employees
• $179 Million in payroll
DISTRICT 6
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 296 Small Business Employers
• 4,077 Creative Economy Employees
• $98 Million in payroll
DISTRICT 9
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides
• 234 Small Business Employers
• 2,203 Creative Economy Employees
• $60 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO PA GSP
$27,116,715,000
[3.4%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
180,849
READ PENNSYLVANIA TESTIMONIALS HERE
Pg.28
SOURCE: NASAA & SBA


YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
TEXAS
DISTRICT 24
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 270 Small Business Employers
• 3,020 Creative Economy Employees
• $69 Million in payroll
DISTRICT 25
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 318 Small Business Employers
• 2,328 Creative Economy Employees
• $70 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO TX GSP
$49,765,714,000
[2.7%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
391,922
READ TEXAS TESTIMONIALS HERE
Pg.29
SOURCE: NASAA & SBA


YOUR STATE AT A GLANCE
WISCONSIN
DISTRICT 5
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation provides:
• 343 Small Business Employers
• 4,797 Creative Economy Employees
• $82 Million in payroll
ARTS & CULTURE VALUE ADDED TO WI GSP
$10,894,618,000
[3.1%]
ARTS & CULTURE JOBS
96,450
READ WISCONSIN TESTIMONIALS HERE
Pg.30
SOURCE: NASAA & SBA


Pg.31
03 THE PERIL OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY
I AM AN ARTS WORKER
BEANARTSHERO.COM
#ARTSWORKERSUNITE

03 THE PERIL OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY



- The U.S. Census Bureau's Small Business Pulse Survey reports that "arts, entertainment, and recreation" businesses are among the most likely to take longer than 6 months to recover from the pandemic.
- BIPOC organizations were more likely to report that they lack the financial resources needed to return to in-person programming than non-BIPOC organizations (55% vs. 38%).
- Johns Hopkins University reports that, as of December 2021, the percentage of job losses at nonprofit arts organizations remains more than 3 times worse than the average of all nonprofits (-12.5% vs. -3.7%).

03 THE PERIL OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY



SOURCE

- At the height of the pandemic in 2020, 63% of Arts Workers experienced unemployment and 95% lost creative income.
- BIPOC artists had higher rates of unemployment than white artists in 2020 due to the pandemic (69% vs. 60%) and lost a larger percentage of their creative income (61% vs. 56%).
- 37% of artists were unable to access or afford food at some point during the pandemic and 58% did not visit a medical professional due to an inability to pay.

SOURCE

03 THE PERIL OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY



The America Alliance of Museums conducted the third iteration of a survey of 1,004 museums to assess the impacts of COVID-19 on the museum field.

In 2021:

- 76% of American museums' income fell an average of 40%
- 15% (or over 5,000 U.S. museums) still felt that closure was imminent.
- 46% of museums reported decreases in staffing, with an average of 29% fewer employees.

READ MORE HERE



Music Workers Alliance surveyed nearly 300 music workers for their comprehensive survey: "How Are We Surviving"

- 71% of musicians and DJs surveyed have lost more than three quarters of their income during the pandemic.
- Many musicians reported not receiving unemployment, or receiving an incorrect amount, due to their hybrid or freelance status, since unemployment does not take 1099 income into account.

READ MORE HERE

03 THE PERIL OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY



"More than $150 billion of Creative Economy sales and goods were estimated to be lost between April and July of 2020."

READ THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION'S COVID STUDY

03 THE PERIL OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY



DANCE/NYC surveyed 135 independent dance workers between November 2020 and May 2021.

- 49% [of dance workers surveyed] are considering long-term career options outside of dance
- Individual dance workers lost 36% of their income on average between 2019 and 2020, or double the losses that were anticipated in Spring 2020.

READ MORE HERE



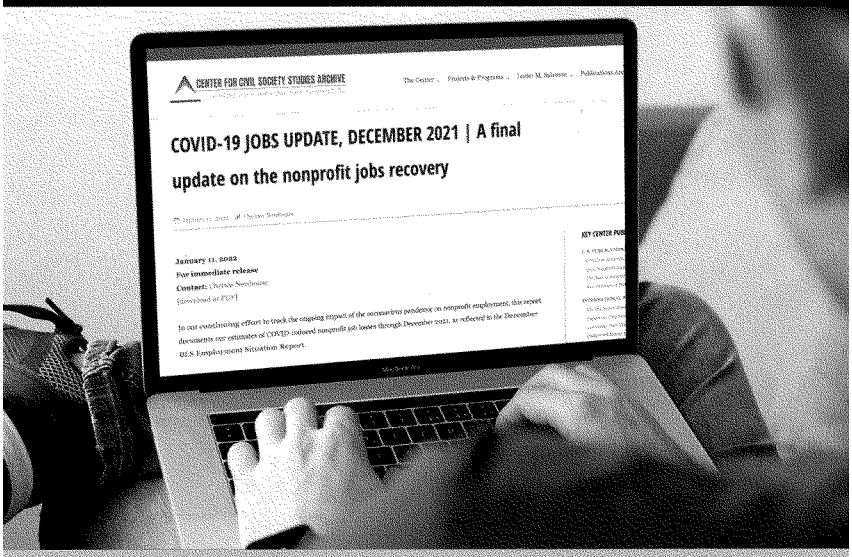
The Costume Industry Coalition surveyed 100% of their membership of 55 small businesses employing 500 artisans.

The Costume Industry Coalition represents 55 small businesses that create, supply and care for costumes seen on stages and screens worldwide. Due to the pandemic, their members:

- Lost over $26.6 million in gross revenue in 2020
- Ended 2020 with collective debt of over $3.5 million.

READ MORE HERE

03 THE PERIL OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY



"...nowhere has the effect been more direct, deep, and immediate than on the performing arts."

READ THE JOHNS HOPKINS REPORT

03 THE PERIL OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY



DANCE USA surveyed 986 leaders of dancemaking and presenting member organizations, and individual dancemakers in a 2-part survey in 2020 and again in 2021

- The number of live productions significantly decreased from the pre-covid era (2018-2019 season) to today by -77.4% across all reporting dancemaking organizations.
- 30% of individual dance workers reported that they either did not know where to go or whom to contact for support.

READ MORE HERE



The National Independent Venue Association surveyed it's membership of over 3,000 venues, promoters and festivals.

In 2020:

- 90% of independent venues report they will close permanently without federal funding.
- Pollstar estimates a $9 billion loss in ticket sales - not counting food and beverage revenue - for 2020 alone.

READ MORE HERE

03 THE PERIL OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

FEMA

COVID-19's Impacts on Arts & Culture

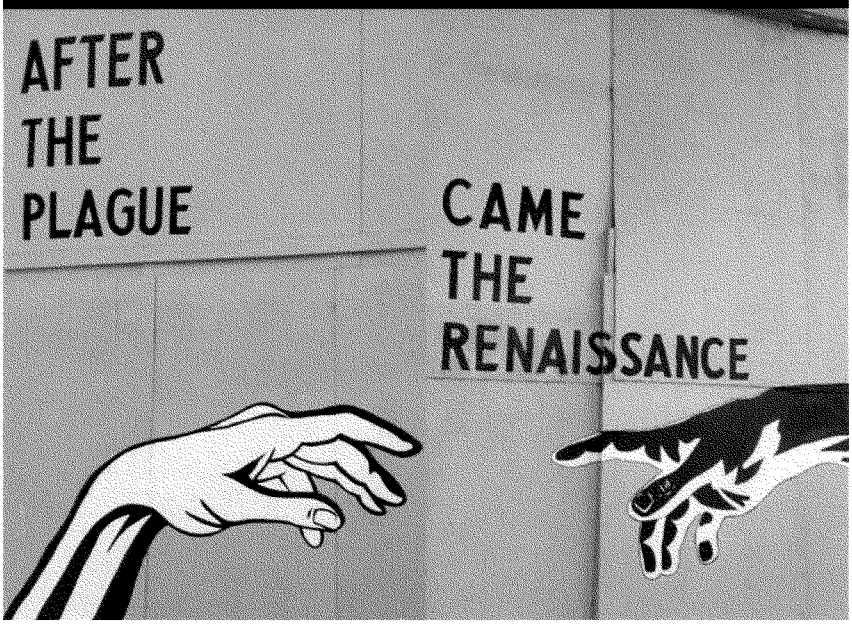
READ HERE

The Economic Impact of Coronavirus on the Arts & Culture Sector

READ HERE

AMERICANS for the ARTS

04 THE PROMISE OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

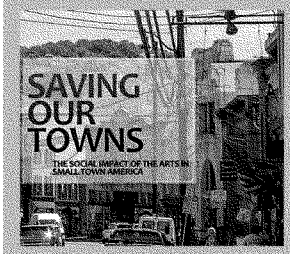


04 THE PROMISE OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

ART & PROSPERITY

New research suggests a causal relationship between a thriving Arts economy and overall employment and economic prosperity. The more thriving a local Arts sector, the more economic growth in tourism & hospitality (i.e. hotels, breweries, coffee shops, restaurants and related businesses).

CASE STUDIES



AWU's case studies on the profound socio-economic impact of the installation of a single Arts & Culture institution in small town, USA.

READ HERE

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

KNOWLEDGE • REPRESENTATION • COMMUNITY

NASAA's 11-state case study examines the strong synergies between cultural development and economic development and resiliency.

READ HERE

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT for the ARTS

78 case studies of recipients of NEA's "Our Town" project which invests in creative placemaking in order to advance local economic, physical, & social outcomes.

READ HERE

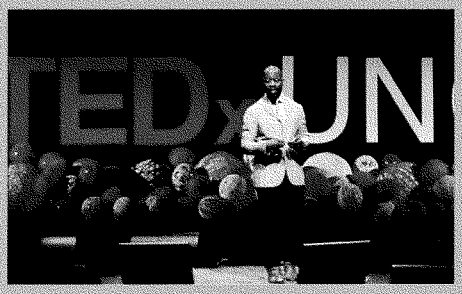
04 THE PROMISE OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

INNOVATORS FOR THE FUTURE

In rural areas, 27.3% of businesses rated "substantive innovators" were Arts & Culture businesses. In urban areas, it's 32.3%.

"Substantive innovators" are businesses that engage in activities such as launching new products and services, making data-driven decisions, and creating intellectual property worth protecting."

"Creativity, originality, and initiative is the number three skill set predicted to be in demand for 2022."
-World Economic Forum



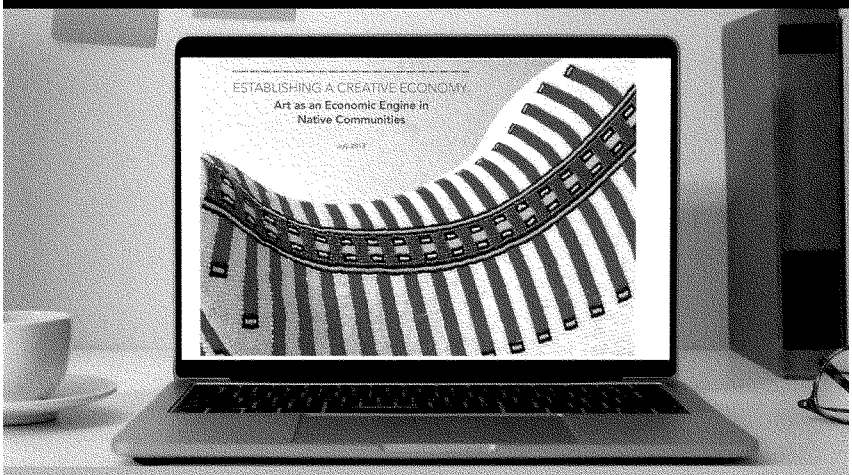
Creating Heat: The Artist as Catalyst

Theaster Gates at TEDxUNC

WATCH HERE

Pg.42

04 THE PROMISE OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY



Establishing a Creative Economy: Art as an Economic Engine in Native Communities

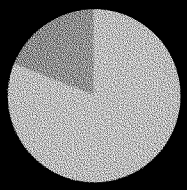
In 2011, First Peoples Fund and Artspace partnered with the Northwest Area Foundation, Colorado State University and Leveraging Investments in Creativity on the American Indian Creative Economy Market Study Project. This survey examined household economics, infrastructure needs and social networks of Native artists.

READ THE STUDY HERE

Pg.43

04 THE PROMISE OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

TOURISM



81% of U.S. tourists are considered **cultural tourists.**

Because 81% of all tourism is cultural, the way to build back our economy is by investing in the Creative Economy. Hotels, restaurants, travel, and hospitality rely on a thriving Arts & Culture sector.

Cultural tourists spend more and stay longer:

Cultural tourists spend on average 60% more than other tourists.



Pg.44

SOURCE

04 THE PROMISE OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

ECONOMIC DRIVERS

"Between 2015 and 2017, the arts and cultural sector grew at more than twice the rate of the total U.S. economy—at nearly 4.45 percent, in terms of annual average growth rate." [NEA]

ECONOMIC DRIVERS

AMERICANS for the ARTS

Arts & Economic Prosperity IV is AFTA's 4th study of the nonprofit arts and culture industry's impact on the economy.

READ HERE

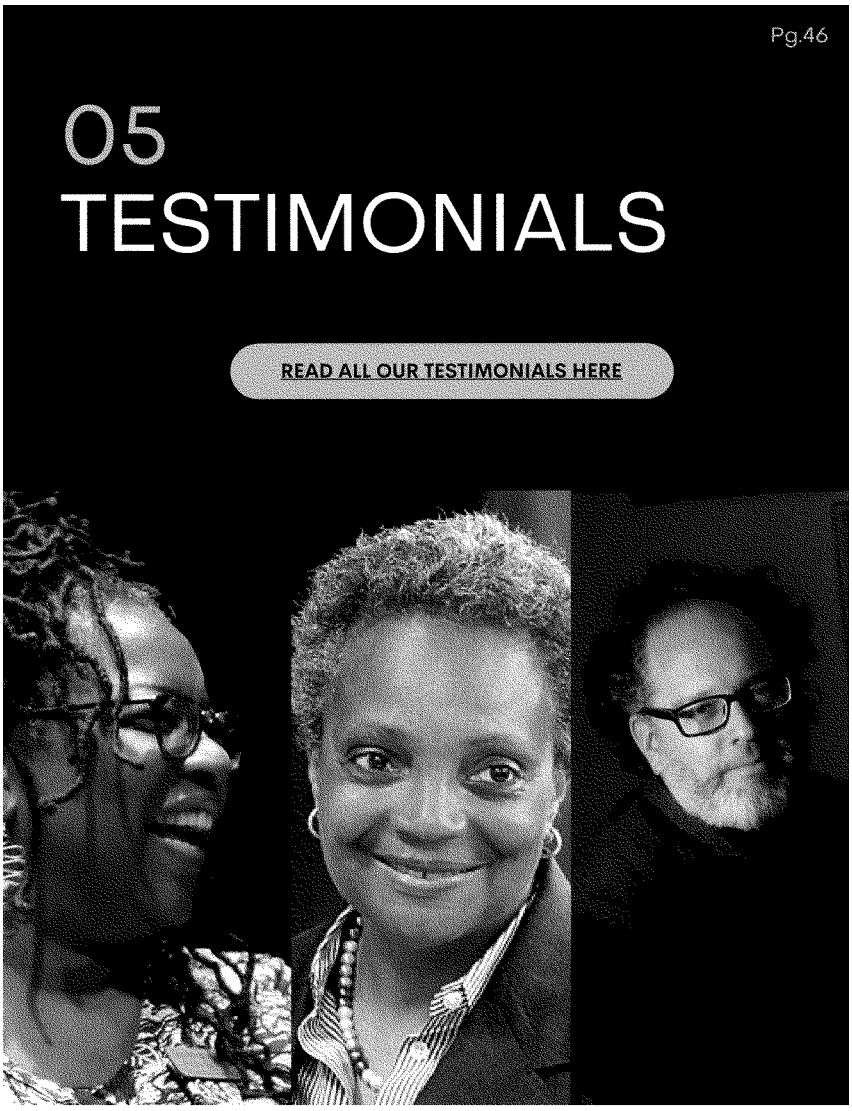
National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

KNOWLEDGE ★ REPRESENTATION ★ COMMUNITY

A report on the Arts & Culture sector's contributions to economic recovery and resiliency in the United States.

READ HERE

Pg.45


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05
TESTIMONIALS
READ ALL OUR TESTIMONIALS HERE

05 TESTIMONIALS



MAYOR LONDON N. BREED
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

MAYOR LORI E. LIGHTFOOT
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

MAYOR JIM KENNEY
PHILLADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

> Urgent and coordinated action is needed to integrate arts, culture, and the creative economy into our national recovery and revitalization efforts; ensuring much needed relief for artists, who are drivers of wellbeing in their communities and essential arts and culture organizational partners.

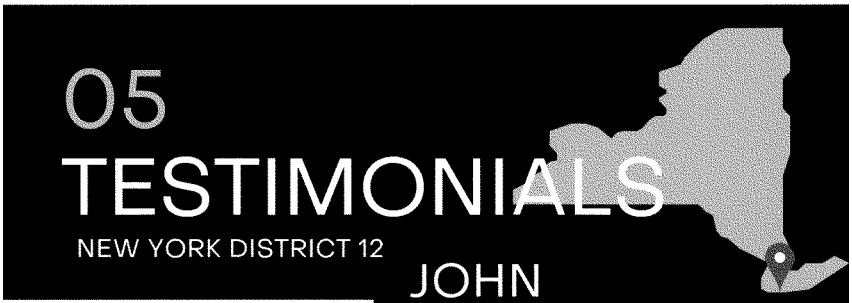
READ THEIR FULL JOINT TESTIMONY HERE

Pg.47


05
TESTIMONIALS
...festivals have been canceled and fine arts theatres are closing which has impacted my ability to screen films and expand distribution.
READ MORE HERE
Lisa Marie Evans
Fayetteville, AR
District 3
I'm not only a Circus Artist; I am a business owner, and former Two-Time World Champion in Acrobatic gymnastics, USA Gymnastics Hall of Fame Member, and Cirque Du Soleil Artist.
READ MORE HERE
Shenea Booth
Los Angeles, CA District 34
READ ALL OUR TESTIMONIALS HERE
Pg.48

05 TESTIMONIALS

NEW YORK DISTRICT 12



JOHN KRISTIANSEN & BRIAN-BLYTHE

JKNY COSTUME SHOP



John and Brian run a small business and raise a family of six together.



JKNY employs over 52 Arts Workers in New York.

"New York State set aside $800 million for small business relief, but the parameters (revenue caps, ineligibility if federal relief was received) made JKNY ineligible. The funds were not specifically earmarked for the arts and entertainment sector–yet, there is a dependence on the sector to bring back tourism in the state and specifically New York City."

READ THEIR TESTIMONY HERE

Pg.49

KATIE MOORE-DERKITS

Executive Director, Kun-Yang Lin/Dancers

PHILADELPHIA, PA
DISTRICT 3

Without the ability for many to earn a stable living in my field, or receive sustained relief for food and housing costs, life in Philadelphia as a dance artist is not viable. Our industry is one of the key cultural engines of Philadelphia and one that people look to-- to help heal, connect and revive. Today, however, I am deeply worried about the health of my organization, my colleagues, and the survival of the entire dance field.

READ MORE HERE





KATHLEEN SPEHAR

Executive Director
Council on Culture & Arts

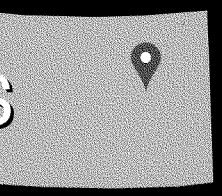
TALLAHASSEE, FL
DISTRICT 9

During the pandemic, our agency's budget dropped almost 50% @ $1M in 6 months. Our tourism support, which funds over 65 projects annually throughout our community, shrunk by over 70% and is still in recovery. 95% of our events were cancelled or postponed and though virtual programming has assisted in creating needed access, live indoor performance attendance is, on average, 40-60% of pre-pandemic levels.

READ MORE HERE

05 TESTIMONIALS

FORT COLLINS, CO, DISTRICT 2



"The COVID-19 crisis illuminated several structural weaknesses in the creative economy. One of these weaknesses concerns data. Many industries in the creative economy are notoriously difficult to quantify due to the lack of specificity in official data. This is largely a function of how various federal institutions collect and organize data through the use of the United States Office of Management and Budget's North American Industrial Classification System codes, or "NAICS" codes."

READ HIS NAICS CODE RECOMMENDATIONS HERE



DR. MICHAEL SEMAN

THE LEAP INSTITUTE AT COLORADO STATE UNIVERISTY

LOST ART:

Measuring COVID-19's devastating impact on America's creative economy

Dr. Seman is the co-author of the Brooking Institution's Covid Impact Study: "Lost Art: Measuring COVID-19's devastating impact on America's creative economy"

READ STUDY HERE


Pg.52
05
TESTIMONIALS
"Between our organization and the audiences we serve, this accounts for approximately $1,094,356 in total expenditures, supporting 35 full-time equivalent jobs, earning $933,006 in household incomes, and generating $49,620 and $68,742 in local and state revenues respectively."
READ MORE HERE
Angi Hejduk,
Overland Park, KS, District 3
I'm not only an arts worker and have been for 40 years, I am a two-time GRAMMY award winning artist and small business owner who employs 7 Louisiana residents.
READ MORE HERE
Terrance Simien
Lafayette, LA, District 3
READ ALL OUR TESTIMONIALS HERE

05 TESTIMONIALS

BEN RIBLER
VIRGINIA DISTRICT 8



WATCH HERE

EDNA RAIA
CALIFORNIA DISTRICT 12



WATCH HERE


Pg.54
05
TESTIMONIALS
NEW YORK, NY [D-
DANCE/NYC
DANCE/NYC
DANCE/NYC SERVES:
• 5,000+ individual dance artists
• 1,200+ dance-making entities
• 500+ nonprofit dance companies
In the dance sector specifically, 85% of organizations canceled programming and operations in order to survive the pandemic, with anticipated earned and contributed revenue losses of $190 million ($2.3 million per organization on average). The effects of these losses are compounding, as more than half of organizations reported that they were unsure of their ability to continue compensating their artists, who collectively stood to lose $4.9 million in income from loss of work in the dance field.
READ MORE HERE

05 TESTIMONIALS

JEREMY KOCH
MICHIGAN DISTRICT 6

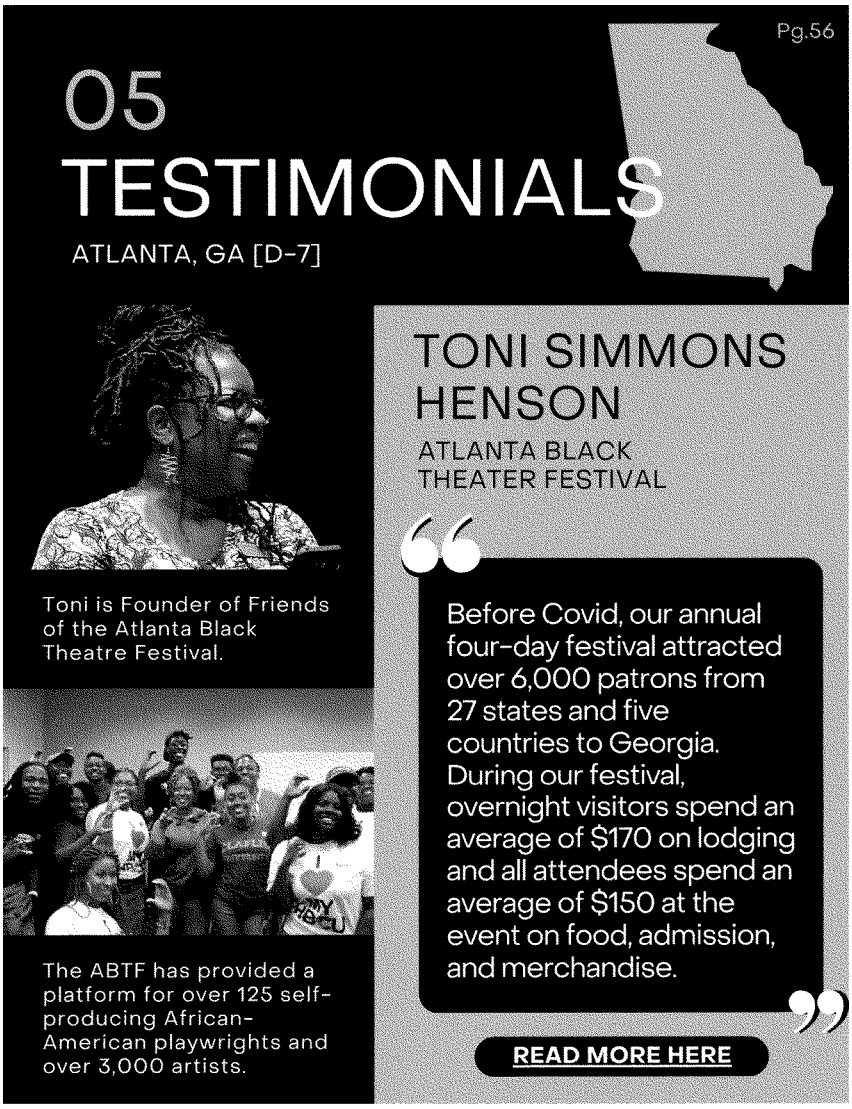


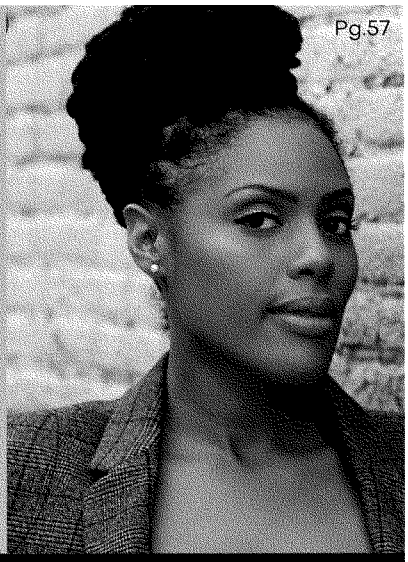
WATCH HERE

LAUREN MILLER
NEW YORK DISTRICT 7



WATCH HERE


Pg.56
05
TESTIMONIALS
ATLANTA, GA [D-7]
Toni is Founder of Friends of the Atlanta Black Theatre Festival.
The ABTF has provided a platform for over 125 self-producing African-American playwrights and over 3,000 artists.
TONI SIMMONS HENSON
ATLANTA BLACK THEATER FESTIVAL
Before Covid, our annual four-day festival attracted over 6,000 patrons from 27 states and five countries to Georgia. During our festival, overnight visitors spend an average of $170 on lodging and all attendees spend an average of $150 at the event on food, admission, and merchandise.
READ MORE HERE



NIKKOLE SALTER

EAST ORANGE, NJ DISTRICT 10

Executive Director
The Continuum Project, Inc.

I am not only an arts worker, I am a business owner of a production company, BusinessSHOW which has partnered with Cabin Kid Productions to produce the entire first season of our new webseries The Cuttin' Room Floor, in your district, bringing focus to the rich cultural tapestry that is District 10.

READ MORE HERE



RACHEL APPLEGATE

HOUSTON, TX DISTRICT 7

Director of Marketing and Communications
Alley Theatre

"The Alley Theatre employed 206 people and served several hundred thousand Houstonians and Texans. The Alley's work is also recognized nationally as we have toured in 40 American cities and our plays have been presented on Broadway.

READ MORE HERE

05 TESTIMONIALS

LISA LEWIS
NEW YORK DISTRICT 8



WATCH HERE

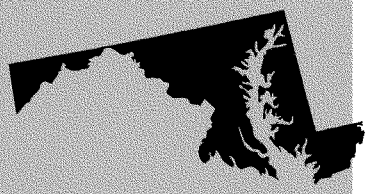
SARAH BOLTON
TENNESSEE DISTRICT 9



WATCH HERE


Pg.59
05
TESTIMONIALS
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA [D-1]
Today, while our nation has not emerged totally from the pandemic, it is prudent to examine components of our economy so that we can identify policies that will further our nation's recovery. An examination of the creative economy today sends an important signal that Congress understands and appreciates the vital role artists, arts organizations and creative businesses have on the American economy.
READ HER TESTIMONY HERE
PAM BREAUX
PRESIDENT/CEO, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF STATE ARTS AGENCIES (NASAA)
NASAA is the professional association of the nation's 56 state and jurisdictional arts agencies.

05 TESTIMONIALS



"Imagination Stage employs 40 full-time, salaries employees year-round and an additional 250 or more contracted artists, teachers and artisans throughout the year. In pre-pandemic times, we served 100,000 children, teachers and caregivers across the Washington, DC metro area."

READ MORE HERE



Janet Stanford
Bethesda, MD, District 8

"As the Vice President of Programming & Education at the Ordway Center in Saint Paul, I and my colleagues work to bring thousands of people to downtown Saint Paul, bringing much needed business to the restaurants, bars and parking ramps in the area."

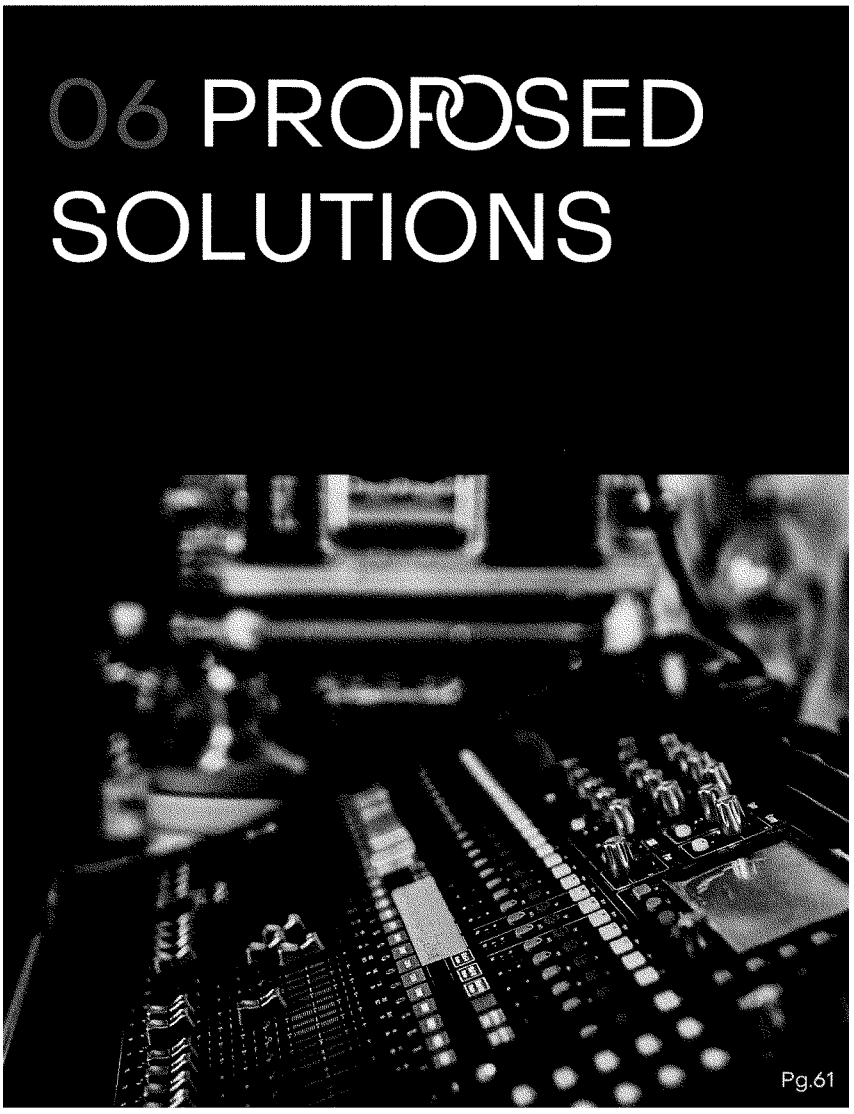
READ MORE HERE



Dayna Martinez
Minneapolis, MN, District 2



READ ALL OUR TESTIMONIALS HERE


06 PROPOSED
SOLUTIONS
Pg.61

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS 01



Pass Existing Legislation

Pg.62

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS 01 Pass existing legislation

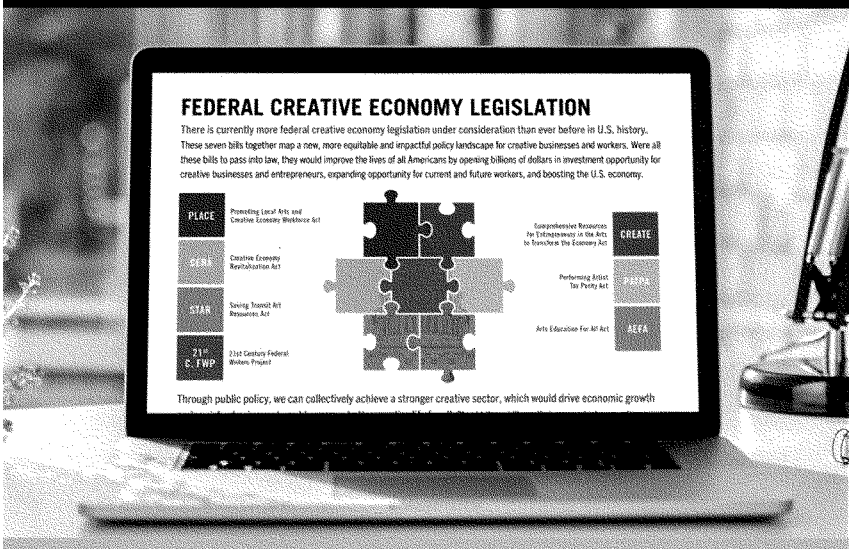
Congress has a unique opportunity to harness the power of the Creative Economy to recover from the pandemic. To do so, Congress must pass existing Creative Economy targeted legislation, bring relief to the nation's unemployed Arts Workers, and commit to a thorough understanding of the Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy.

(S.1856)	**CREATE**
(S.3232)	**PLACE Act**
(H.R.8430)	**CALMER**
(H.R.4750 / S.2872)	**PATPA**
(H.R.5581)	**AEFA**
(H.R.5019 / S.2858)	**CERA**
(H.R.3054)	**21CFWP**
(H.R.2380)	**STAR Act**
(H.R.1945)	**HITS**
(H.R.7011)	**PRIA**
(H.R.1793)	**The Artist-Museum Partnership Act of 2019**

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PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

01
Pass existing legislation



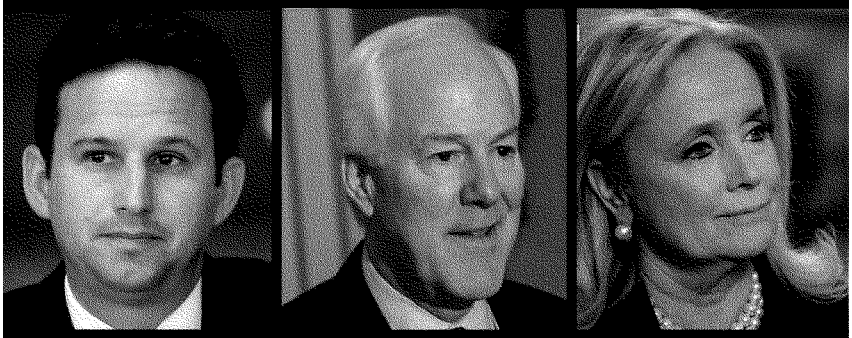
"There is currently more federal creative economy legislation under consideration than ever before in U.S. history."

READ AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS' CREATIVE LEGISLATION INFODOC

Pg.64

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

01
Pass existing legislation



CREATE
HR 6381

Sponsors:
Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI),
Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX),
Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-MI)

The bi-partisan Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act (CREATE Act) aligns policy to serve those that make our creative economy prosper. It expands SBA and EDA loan programs, and integrates creative work into support programs.

READ HERE

Pg.65

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

01
Pass existing legislation

CALMER
H.R.8430

The Culture, Arts, Libraries, and Museums Emergency Relief Act (CALMER) is an emergency relief bill for the arts & culture non-profit community. "This bill will give libraries, museums, and arts groups the assistance they need to pull through and continue enriching our communities nationwide."

Sponsor:
Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY-12)

READ HERE

PLACE
TO BE RE-INTRODUCED
1/26/2022

The Promoting Local Arts and Creative Economy Workforce Act (PLACE Act) bolsters local creative economies and workers in creative industries. It amends existing legislation to include the arts, creates new creative economy grants, and directs funding for creative businesses.

Sponsors:
Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI)
Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME)

READ HERE

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

01
Pass existing legislation



AEFA

HR 5581

Sponsors:
Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR)
Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME)
Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández (D-NM)

The Arts Education for All Act (AEFA), the broadest arts education bill ever introduced, supports universal arts education from pre-K through 12th grade, as well as in the juvenile justice system. It closes existing equity gaps to improve health, academic, social, and career success.

READ HERE

Pg.67

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

01

Pass existing legislation



PATPA

HR 4750 / S 2872

The Performing Arts Tax Parity Act (PATPA), a bipartisan bill in both the House and the Senate, updates the Qualified Performing Artist tax deduction, modernizing a provision that has been on the books since it was signed into law in the 1980s, so that middle- class arts workers can deduct common business expenses.

Sponsors:
Rep. Judy Chu (D-CA)
Rep. Vern Buchanan (R-FL)
Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA)
Sen. Bill Hagerty (R-TN)

READ HERE

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PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

01
Pass existing legislation

21CFWP
HR 3054

Inspired by the 1935 Federal Writers' Project of the New Deal Era, the 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act (21CFWP) will help address the mass unemployment of writers by authorizing a new grant program and will create a nationally administered archives for the commissioned writing.

READ HERE

Sponsors:
Rep. Ted Lieu (D-CA), Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández (D-NM)

STAR
HR 2380

The Saving Transit Arts Resources Act (STAR Act) restores control to local transit authorities regarding art and non-functional landscaping in federally funded transit projects. It returns federal transportation policy to what was the status quo for 30 years until a 2015 reauthorization unexpectedly prohibited such purposes.

READ HERE

Sponsors:
Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC)

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PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

01

Pass existing legislation



CERA

HR 5019 / S 2858

Sponsors:
Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández (D- NM)
Rep. Jay Obernolte (R-CA)
Sen. Ben Luján (D-NM)

The Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA), a bi-partisan workforce bill, authorizes $300m in grants for local creative workers to create public Arts & Cultural projects like festivals, performances, public art, narrative gathering from first responders and marginalized communities, and arts education work.

READ HERE

Pg.70

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

01
Pass existing legislation

HITS
H.R.1945

Sponsor:
Rep. Linda T. Sánchez (D-CA-38)

The Help Independent Tracks Succeed Act (HITS), permits taxpayers to treat as currently deductible expenses incurred in the cost of qualified sound recording productions not exceeding $150,000 in a taxable year. The bill defines qualified sound recording production as certain sound recordings produced and recorded in the United States."

READ HERE

PRIA
HR 5823

Sponsors:
Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY-12)

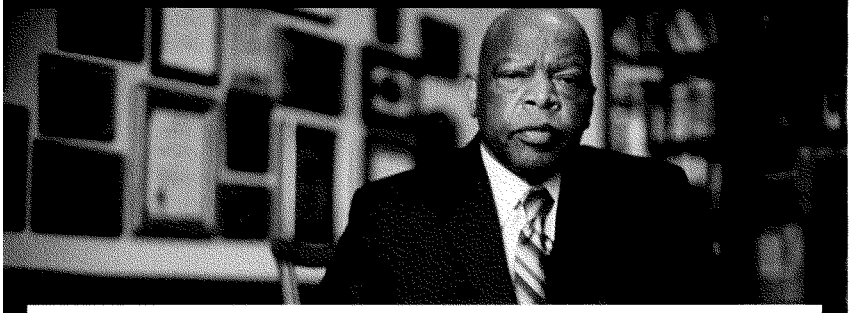
The Pandemic Risk Insurance Act (PRIA) generally provides compensation to insurers if they incur losses as a result of coverage related to pandemics and outbreaks of disease

READ HERE

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PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

01
Pass existing legislation



THE ARTIST-MUSEUM PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 2019

H.R.1793

Sponsor:
Rep. Lewis, John [D-GA-5]

This act was sponsored in 2019 by Rep. Lewis, John (D-GA-5,) before his death.

"This bill allows taxpayers who create literary, musical, artistic, scholarly compositions, or similar property a fair market value (determined at the time of contribution) tax deduction for contributions of such properties, the copyrights thereon, or both, to certain tax-exempt organizations, if such properties are properly appraised and are donated no less than 18 months after their creation. The bill limits the amount of the deduction based upon the donor's artistic adjusted gross income, as defined by this bill."

READ HERE

Pg.72

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS 02



Modify existing legislation

Pg.73

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS 02

Modify existing legislation/ policy

Congress can modify existing laws in order to put creative workers to work. This would give new job opportunities to creatives while increasing the efficacy of existing programs.

The Put Creative Workers To Work Proposal suggests Modifying:

- **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act**
- **Public Works and Economic Development Act;**
- **38 U.S.C. § 3116**
- **Small Business Act**
- **Unemployment, Insurance, food, and housing policies**

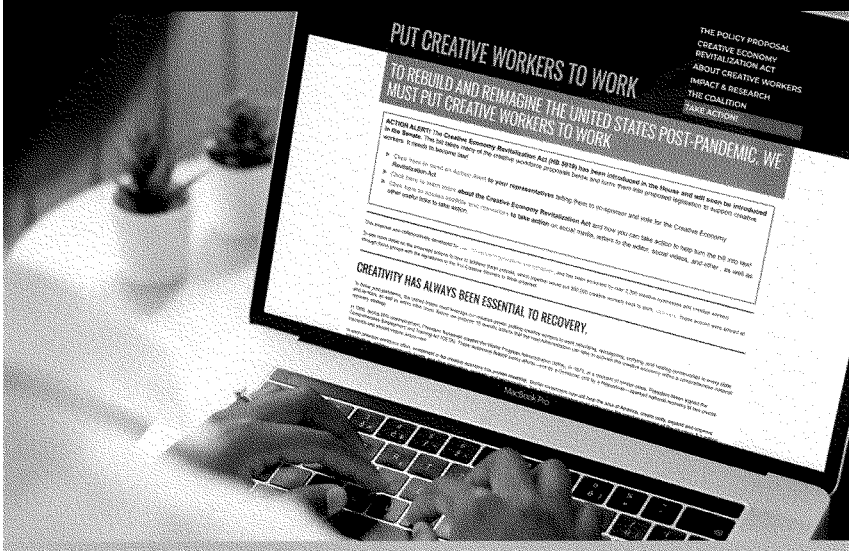
The Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives Proposes Modifying:

- **Main Street Lending Program**
- **Paycheck Protection Program**
- **S.4032/H.R.7324**

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

02

Modify existing legislation/policy

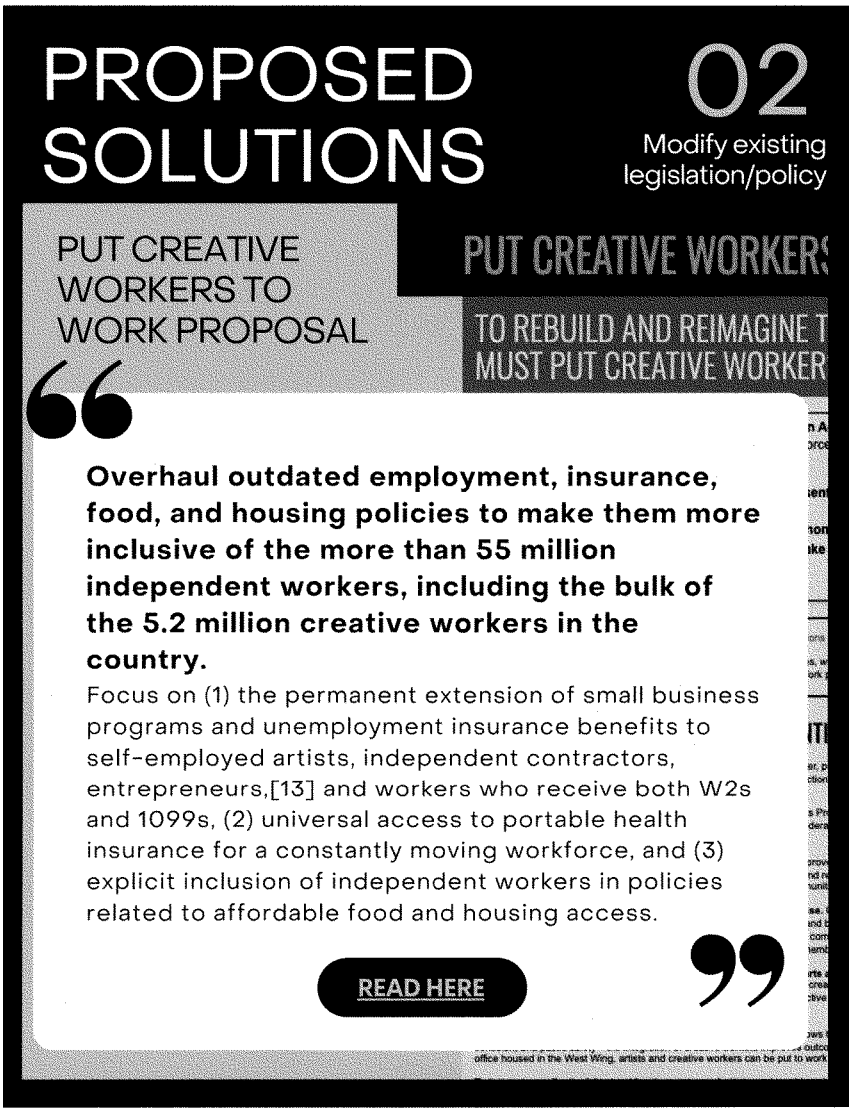


The Put Creative Workers to Work proposal was collaboratively developed by over 100 partner organizations and individuals, and has been endorsed by over 2,300 creative businesses and creative workers. It includes suggested modifications to existing policy/legislation.

READ HERE

Pg.75


PROPOSED SOLUTIONS
02
Modify existing legislation/policy
PUT CREATIVE WORKERS TO WORK PROPOSAL
PUT CREATIVE WORKERS
TO REBUILD AND REIMAGINE TH
Ensure that the creative economy is explicitly included in existing policy, rules, and regulations.
Without requiring the authorization of any new spending, make targeted policy adjustments to authorize access to federal funds for creative workers and businesses working in communities.
Examples include adjusting language in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to authorize a Creative Economy Grants program within the Department of Labor and include explicit support for creative enterprise within broader support of Native communities; integrating creative economy apprenticeship and internship grants into the Public Works and Economic Development Act; incentivizing the training and hiring of veterans in creative fields by altering language in 38 U.S.C. § 3116; and amending the Small Business Act to more explicitly include creative businesses in its technical assistance and financial support programs.
READ HERE
To that end, we offer the following 16 actions—many of which can be achieved thr


PROPOSED SOLUTIONS
02
Modify existing legislation/policy
PUT CREATIVE WORKERS TO WORK PROPOSAL
PUT CREATIVE WORKERS
TO REBUILD AND REIMAGINE T
MUST PUT CREATIVE WORKER
Overhaul outdated employment, insurance, food, and housing policies to make them more inclusive of the more than 55 million independent workers, including the bulk of the 5.2 million creative workers in the country.
Focus on (1) the permanent extension of small business programs and unemployment insurance benefits to self-employed artists, independent contractors, entrepreneurs,[13] and workers who receive both W2s and 1099s, (2) universal access to portable health insurance for a constantly moving workforce, and (3) explicit inclusion of independent workers in policies related to affordable food and housing access.
READ HERE
office housed in the West Wing, artists and creative workers can be put to work

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

02
Modify existing legislation/policy

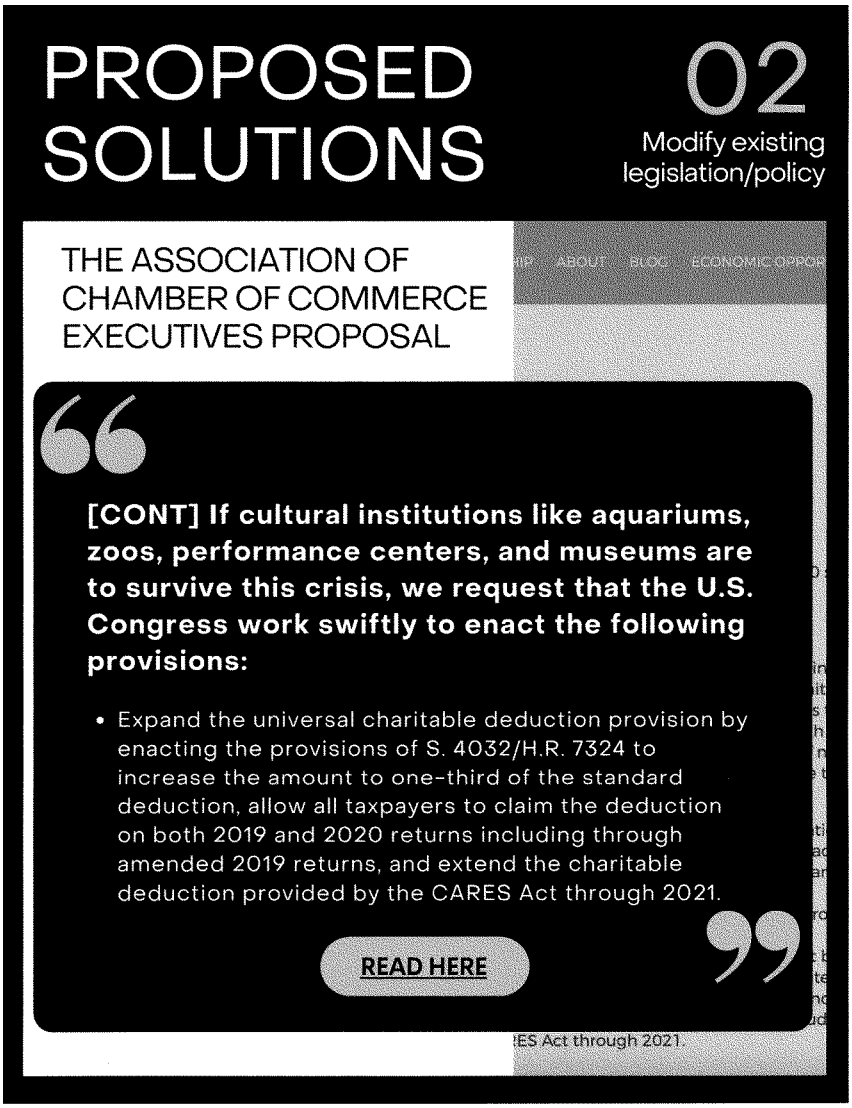


In August of 2020, the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives wrote to the Speaker of the House, the House minority leader the Senate majority leader, and minority leader, strongly urging them to act on behalf of the devastated Arts & Culture sector; it was signed by 205 American chambers of commerce.

READ HERE

Pg.78


PROPOSED SOLUTIONS
02
Modify existing legislation/policy
THE ASSOCIATION OF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE EXECUTIVES PROPOSAL
READ HERE
If cultural institutions like aquariums, zoos, performance centers, and museums are to survive this crisis, we request that the U.S. Congress work swiftly to enact the following provisions:
• Require the Federal Reserve to broaden their nonprofit lending facility under the Main Street Lending Program to specifically benefit mid-size nonprofits to those with more than 500 employees, and a loan forgiveness option.
• Increase and extend the Paycheck Protection Program and loan forgiveness provisions in the CARES Act by enabling a second round of funding for all non-profits – including zoos, aquariums, museums, and performing arts centers with greater than 500 employees.


PROPOSED SOLUTIONS
02
Modify existing legislation/policy
THE ASSOCIATION OF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE EXECUTIVES PROPOSAL
[CONT] If cultural institutions like aquariums, zoos, performance centers, and museums are to survive this crisis, we request that the U.S. Congress work swiftly to enact the following provisions:
• Expand the universal charitable deduction provision by enacting the provisions of S. 4032/H.R. 7324 to increase the amount to one-third of the standard deduction, allow all taxpayers to claim the deduction on both 2019 and 2020 returns including through amended 2019 returns, and extend the charitable deduction provided by the CARES Act through 2021.
READ HERE

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS 03



Investment

Pg.81

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS 03 Investment

We call on Congress to see Arts Workers and Creative Industries as an immense source of fuel for the recovery and revitalization of the entire American economy. Investing in the Arts and Arts Workers will pay dividends above and beyond the initial investment - financially and socially.

The Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives proposes:

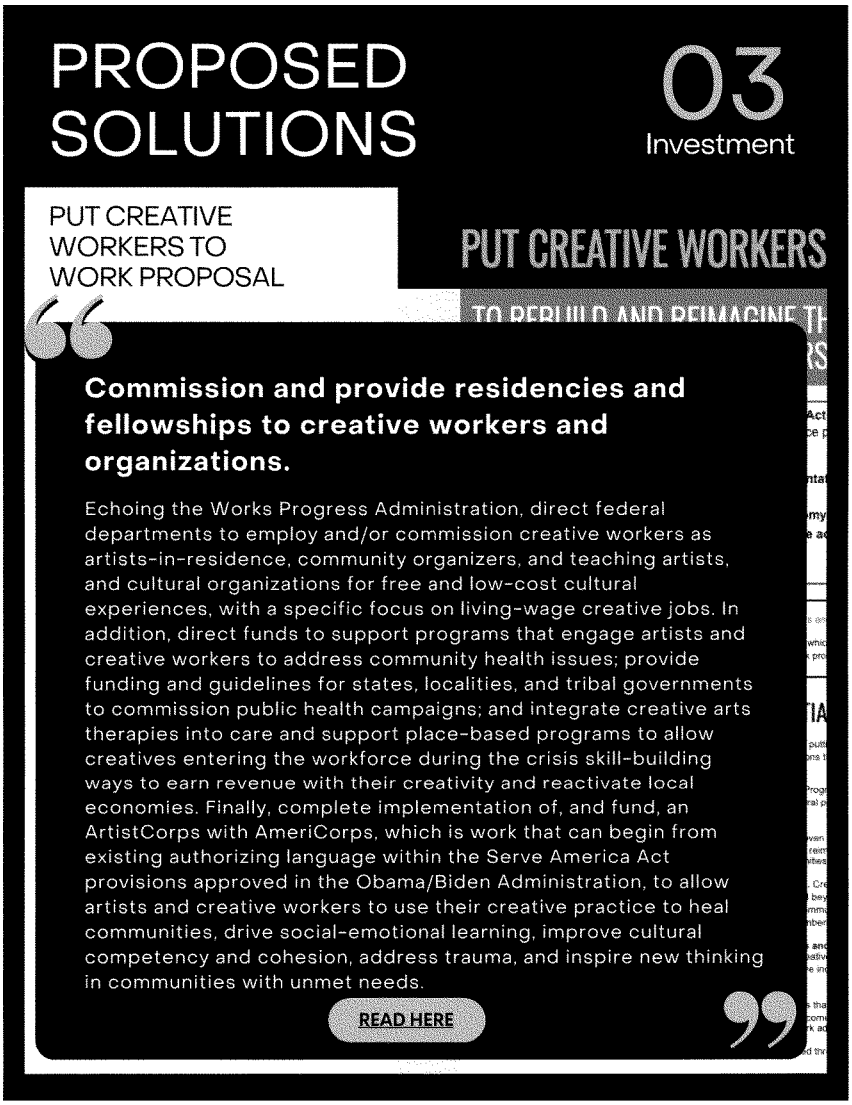
- **$6 billion investment in the IMLS, NEH, and NEA**

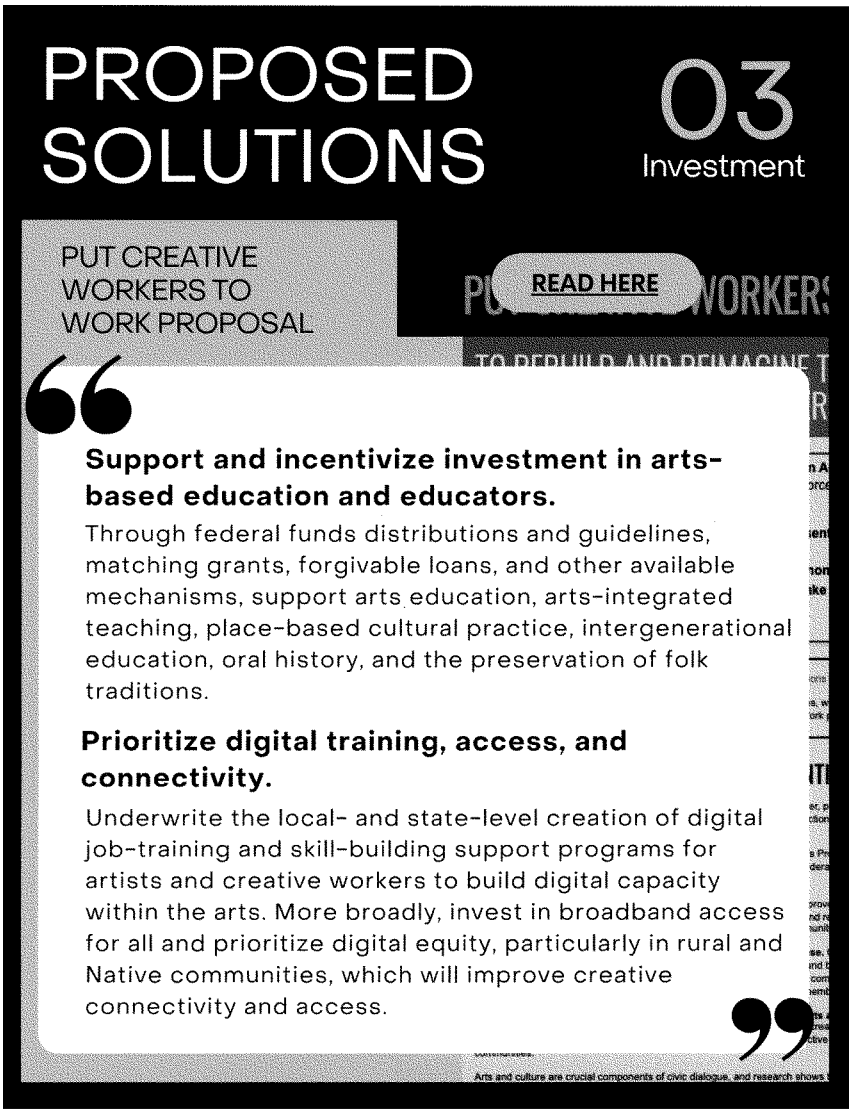
The Put Creative Workers To Work Proposal urges:

- **Incentivize local, state, tribal, and business entities to integrate creative workers.**
- **Commission and provide residencies and fellowships to creative workers and organizations.**
- **Support and incentivize investment in arts-based education and educators.**
- **Prioritize digital training, access, and connectivity.**

Pg.82


PROPOSED SOLUTIONS
03
Investment
PUT CREATIVE WORKERS TO WORK PROPOSAL
PUT CREATIVE WORKERS
TO REBUILD AND REIMAGINE T
MUST PUT CREATIVE WORKER
Incentivize local, state, tribal, and business entities to integrate creative workers.
Support businesses in engaging creative minds and driving innovation through financial incentives to accelerate hiring and re-opening and capitalize efforts to re-open through low- and no-interest loans. Incentivize local and state partners to commission free community engagement opportunities, help cultural venues adapt their facilities and digital platforms, and provide safe settings for family learning, performances, and wellness programs. Focus on organizations that are led by members of and/or based in Black, Indigenous, and communities of color and have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, the economic crisis, and historical inequities.
READ HERE
Arts and culture are crucial components of civic dialogue, and research shows


PROPOSED SOLUTIONS
03
Investment
PUT CREATIVE WORKERS TO WORK PROPOSAL
PUT CREATIVE WORKERS
Commission and provide residencies and fellowships to creative workers and organizations.
Echoing the Works Progress Administration, direct federal departments to employ and/or commission creative workers as artists-in-residence, community organizers, and teaching artists, and cultural organizations for free and low-cost cultural experiences, with a specific focus on living-wage creative jobs. In addition, direct funds to support programs that engage artists and creative workers to address community health issues; provide funding and guidelines for states, localities, and tribal governments to commission public health campaigns; and integrate creative arts therapies into care and support place-based programs to allow creatives entering the workforce during the crisis skill-building ways to earn revenue with their creativity and reactivate local economies. Finally, complete implementation of, and fund, an ArtistCorps with AmeriCorps, which is work that can begin from existing authorizing language within the Serve America Act provisions approved in the Obama/Biden Administration, to allow artists and creative workers to use their creative practice to heal communities, drive social-emotional learning, improve cultural competency and cohesion, address trauma, and inspire new thinking in communities with unmet needs.
READ HERE


PROPOSED SOLUTIONS
03
Investment
PUT CREATIVE WORKERS TO WORK PROPOSAL
READ HERE
Support and incentivize investment in arts-based education and educators.
Through federal funds distributions and guidelines, matching grants, forgivable loans, and other available mechanisms, support arts education, arts-integrated teaching, place-based cultural practice, intergenerational education, oral history, and the preservation of folk traditions.
Prioritize digital training, access, and connectivity.
Underwrite the local- and state-level creation of digital job-training and skill-building support programs for artists and creative workers to build digital capacity within the arts. More broadly, invest in broadband access for all and prioritize digital equity, particularly in rural and Native communities, which will improve creative connectivity and access.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS 04



Research

Pg.86

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS 04 Research

The pandemic has presented unprecedented obstacles for our Creative Economy to properly function. Arts Workers and creative industries have been uniquely impacted. Because the U.S. economy relies on a thriving Creative Economy, it is imperative that Congress assess the scope of the damage and devise appropriate responses to it.

To do that, we must address a data problem. Currently, there is no comprehensive research to contemplate the peril facing our sector. Consequently, we must rely on independent think tanks (Brookings) and individual organizations to conduct their own research assessing the damage to their sector. We need better research and data.

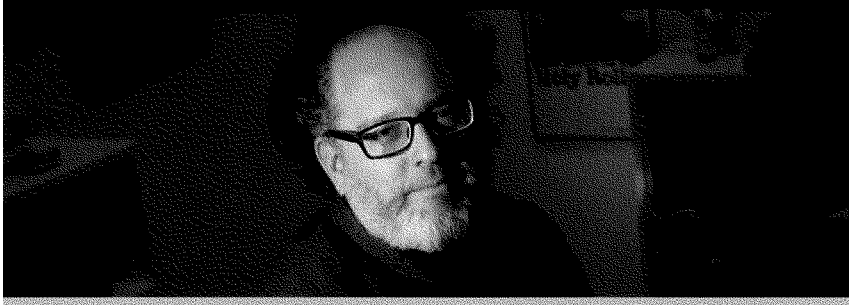
Therefore, we call for a Congressional commission and a GAO report to further explore the Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy, a broader investment in research for our sector, and a revision of our NAICS codes.

Suggestions for improvements in research:

- **Update and modify of NAICS Codes**
- **GAO report**
- **Congressional Comission**

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

04
Research



Dr. Michael Seman holds a PhD in Urban Planning and Public Policy from University of Texas at Arlington, and is an assistant professor for The LEAP Institute (Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Arts Advocacy and the Public). Dr. Seman is the co-author of the Brookings Institute Study: "Lost Art: Measuring COVID-19's devastating impact on America's creative economy." Before joining Colorado State University, Michael was Director of Creative Industries Research and Policy at the University of Colorado Denver College of Arts and Media.

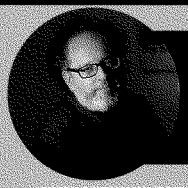
Dr. Seman specializes in Arts & Culture NAICS code reform and has issued his recommendations to Congress.

READ HIS LETTER HERE

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PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

04
Research



North American Industrial Classification System code reform

READ MORE HERE

EXISTING CODES ARE IN BLACK. SUGGESTED NEW CODES ARE IN RED.

7224 Alcoholic beverage drinking places
722410 Bars, Lounges, Taverns, and Tap Rooms
722420 Music Venues with Alcoholic Beverages
722430 Comedy Clubs and Nightclubs with Alcoholic Beverages

7113 Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events
~~**711310 Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events with Facilities**~~
711310 Promoters of Music with Facilities
711311 Promoters of Theater, Dance, and Other Performing Arts with Facilities
711312 Promoters of Sports with Facilities
711313 Promoters of Agricultural and Community Events with Facilities

~~**711320 Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events without Facilities**~~
711320 Promoters of Music without Facilities
711321 Promoters of Theater, Dance, and Other Performing Arts without Facilities
711322 Promoters of Sports without Facilities
711323 Promoters of Agricultural and Community Events without Facilities

7114 Agents and Managers for Artists, Athletes, Entertainers, and Other Public Figures
711410 Agents and Managers for Artists, Entertainers, and Other Public Figures
711411 Agents and Managers for Athletes

7115 Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers
~~**711510 Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers**~~
711510 Independent Fine Artists
711511 Independent Dancers and Choreographers
711512 Independent Theater Artists, Producers, Directors, and Technicians
711513 Independent Film and Television Artists, Producers, Directors, and Technicians
711514 Independent Music Producers, Engineers, and Technicians
711515 Independent Radio Personalities, Commentators, and Announcers
711516 Independent Writers and Journalists
711517 Independent Photographers and Photojournalists
711518 Independent Actors and Models
711519 Independent Speakers, Entertainers, and Other Public Figures

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS 05



A Secretary of Arts & Culture

Pg.90

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

05 A Secretary of Arts & Culture

The time is now for American legislators to recognize the necessity for leadership, and acknowledge the costs of lacking that leadership, both domestic and internationally. Without representation of the Creative Economy at home, and American Culture abroad, America will continue to miss opportunities for greatness.

Support for a Secretary of Arts & Culture:

- **The Put Creative Workers To Work Proposal**
- **Letter to the President and Vice President signed by over 10,000 Arts workers**

Pg.91

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

05
A Secretary of Arts & Culture

FROM THE PUT CREATIVE WORKERS TO WORK PROPOSAL:

- **Institute an Office of Arts, Culture, and Creative Economy within the White House.**
- **Coordinate the immediate relief and recovery efforts across federal departments through this office.**
- **Direct the office to focus on the integration of Arts and Culture-based initiatives within the Domestic Policy Council and other non-arts parts of the economy, as well as individual artists and creative workers across all federal agencies**
- **Direct this office to coordinate with the East Wing of the White House, the President's Committee on Arts and Humanities, and the White House Office of Community Engagement on this important and substantial role.**

READ HERE

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

05
A Secretary of Arts & Culture





In January 2020, Tony-winning director Rachel Chavkin and theater director Jenny Koons, penned an open letter to the Biden-Harris administration, calling on them to create a Secretary of Arts and Culture. The letter has been signed by over 10,000 Arts and Culture workers and 18 organizations and labor unions.

READ HERE

Pg.93

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

05
A Secretary of Arts & Culture



OPEN LETTER TO THE BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION

On behalf of the nation's 5.1 million arts workers spanning stage, dance, film, music, performance, writing, and visual arts, we ask that your administration establish a new Cabinet-level agency charged with supporting Arts and Culture.

This is both an issue of values, and a Labor issue: arts workers are vital members of the American labor force. Yet as an industry and workers, we have been largely left behind by the federal government. The lack of Arts and Culture representation at the highest levels of government contributes to this state of affairs.

READ HERE

07 ABOUT ARTS WORKERS UNITED



THE AWU TEAM: [first row:] Brooke Ishibashi, Nikkole Salter, Jenny Grace Makholm, Jeffrey Omura, Gavin Lodge, and Jamie Hafner. [second row:] Amber Henrie, Carson Elrod, Nadia Brown, Matthew-Lee Erlbach, Brandon Hwang, and Amanda Meyer [third row:] Aeneas Sagar Hemphill, Maria DiSalvo, Nhi Corcoran, Whitney Christiansen, Emmanuel Wilson, and Jennifer Abelaj



Home of the Be An #ArtsHero campaign, Arts Workers United is a unique and visionary social welfare organization seeking to educate, organize, and mobilize Arts Workers to harness their collective power to bring about a thriving and just socio-political landscape for the Creative Economy.

We are the fierce translators, advisors, and partners, bridging the gap between policymakers and Arts Workers, creating compelling educational and advocacy campaigns that mobilize our communities, compelling legislative change. We are a people-centric organization, connecting Arts Workers, policymakers, influencers, and legislators through our humanity, relatability, data-driven arguments, and love of Arts & Culture in all its diverse forms.

Arts Workers United

VISIT OUR WEBSITE



This packet was made by Arts Workers.

Design: Jenny Grace Makholm. Copy: Nikkole Salter, Gavin Lodge, Jenny Grace Makholm, Jamie Hafner & Carson Elrod. Research: Whitney Christiansen.

THE Authors Guild

United States House of Representatives
Committee on Small Business

The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy

February 3, 2022

Statement of

Mary Rasenberger

Chief Executive Officer

The Authors Guild, Inc.

Chairwoman Velazquez, Ranking Member Luetkemeyer, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit this written statement on behalf of the Authors Guild in connection with your timely hearing on the creative economy.

I am the CEO of the Authors Guild, the largest and oldest professional organization of authors in the U.S., and of its educational and charitable arm, the Authors Guild Foundation. I am also an attorney with over thirty years of experience practicing copyright law in the private, public, and nonprofit sectors. Between 2002 and 2008, I served for as senior policy advisor for the U.S. Copyright Office and Library of Congress, and as program director for the National Digital Preservation Program.

In my role as CEO of the Guild, I oversee the operations, public policy, and education agenda of an organization that represents more than 12,000 professional, published writers of all genres including historians, biographers, academicians, journalists, and other writers of nonfiction and fiction. We count among our ranks winners of every major literary award, including the Nobel Prize and National Book Award. All of our members have one thing in common—they write books or journalism on an independent contractor basis and are sole proprietors of their own businesses.

The Authors Guild works to promote the rights of *all* authors and journalists to write without interference or threat and to receive fair compensation for their work. For over a century, we have vigorously represented authors' concerns in Washington D.C. We educate and advise Congress and federal agencies on legislation that would affect authors, and we develop and shepherd legislation on behalf of authors and other creators. We collaborate with many other organizations with shared interests on a range of issues, from free speech to copyright, antitrust and creative workers' rights; and we have recently created a coalition of organizations representing freelance creators in various sectors to seek the collective bargaining rights for our respective constituents.[1]

[1] The coalition includes the National Writers Union, the Dramatists Guild, Graphic Artists Guild, Songwriters Guild of America, Songwriters of North America, Music Workers Alliance, the Society of Composers and Lyricists, and other organizations that represent creators.

As someone who has worked with the creative industries for over three decades, I am hard-pressed to think of a more challenging time than now for professional freelance creators. Writers, translators, photographers, playwrights, graphic artists, musicians, songwriters, choreographers, and dancers—the hundreds of thousands of highly-educated, talented, and industrious individuals whose work is the very foundation of their respective creative industries—are all struggling to earn living wages. These individuals provide their labor to bring artistic beauty, ideas, expertise, and insight to us all, and they do this with no employee protections, no benefits, no minimum wages, no ability to collect unemployment benefits, and negligible ability to negotiate their contracts. They are often grossly underpaid—many don't even earn the equivalent of minimum wage—even though the creative economy is built on their work.

The creative sector is a vital part of our national economy. The core copyright industries, including publishing, film, music, software, newspapers, and magazines, together contribute more than $1.5 trillion in annual value to the U.S. GDP, form 7.41% of the U.S. economy, and employ more than six million workers.[2] In 2019, the copyright industries contributed $218.8 billion to U.S. foreign sales and exports, more than the amount in exports from the electronics, chemical, pharmaceutical, aerospace, and agricultural industries.[3] The entire world reads books written by American authors, listens to music written my American composers and performed by American recording artists, and watches movies and TV shows produced in the U.S. And yet the ability of the freelance creative workers, who produce so much of the underlying value in these sectors, to earn a living income and receive basic worker protections is often overlooked or discounted.

In many of the copyright industries, publishers and distributors are demanding greater shares of their exclusive rights for the same amount of compensation, to the point that most creators can no longer sell rights for different uses to separate entities (and thereby earn additional fees), as was contemplated by the 1976 Copyright Act. As a result, while the revenues of distributors, streaming platforms, and other entities who monetize creative content have

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[2] *Copyright Industries in the U.S. Economy: The 2020 Report*, by Robert Stoner and Jéssica Dutra of Economists Incorporated, prepared for the International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA), (December 2020), at 4, https://www.iipa.org/files/uploads/2020/12/2020-IIPA-Report-FINAL-web.pdf.

[3] Id. at 17

skyrocketed in the last decade, creator earnings have plummeted. For instance, authors used to be able to sell audio books to audio book publishers as a way to earn additional money. Now, most major book publishers demand audiobook rights coupled with the book publishing rights, increasing the publishers' income streams while depriving creators of their own bargaining and earning opportunities. A decade earlier, publishers swept up e-book rights as soon as e-books were made available, and after a few years all settled on a startlingly low royalty rate for authors of 25% of net for books and audiobooks—as opposed to what traditionally was conceived of as a fifty-fifty profit split. Fellow freelance creators in other sectors have experienced similar rights grabs. In some creative industries, such as design, employers increasingly insist that the creator work for free (and assign all rights in that work to the employer) before they will hire them for pay.

The present conditions allow only the highest-grossing writers, musicians, performers, artists, and other creators to make a living wage doing the work they often have trained most of their lives to do. A 2018 survey of authors by the Authors Guild—the largest survey of writing-related earnings by U.S. authors ever conducted—found that 61% had postcollege graduate level education and of those 52% had a graduate or professional degree. Yet, the mean writing incomes for full-time authors was just $20,300 in 2017, and less than half of that was from their books. Indeed, more than half (54%) of full-time authors surveyed earned less than the federal poverty threshold of $12,488 from their writing. Literary authors suffered the greatest decline in incomes with a 46% drop in their book-related income in just four years, from 2013 to 2017. This means that many talented, highly educated writers can no longer afford to stay in the profession and are not writing anymore or as much; and many talented young writers are no longer entering the profession. We are losing many potentially great books as a result. It is censorship by impoverishment. Our coalition partners in other fields report similar circumstances.

The pandemic greatly exacerbated the precarity freelance creators have been facing for over a decade. Those who work in or with the performing arts, as the witnesses testified, have been particularly hard hit, but writers and other creators also suffered greatly. With bookstores and libraries closed, and public events cancelled, many writers struggled to make ends meet. According to surveys conducted by the Authors Guild of its members during the pandemic, over 70% of the respondents had lost significant income and on average lost almost half of their

regular pre-pandemic income. The writers surveyed cited loss of freelance journalism work and cancelled speaking engagements due to lockdowns as two leading causes for the slump, followed by fewer teaching opportunities, declining book sales and self-published income, contract cancellations, and payment delays as the other contributing factors.

Not only were authors unable to earn their pre-pandemic incomes, but many—like their peers across the creative industries—faced serious challenges accessing unemployment benefits due to their status as "independent contractors" who mostly work on a 1099-basis (as opposed to traditional W-2 workers). Although the CARES Act, the first of three COVID-19 relief packages, created a new Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefit for independent contractors, it initially disqualified independent contractors who could telework for pay. Even though the Department of Labor later issued new criteria that enabled independent contractors who had lost significant diminution in income (regardless of telework abilities) to collect unemployment under the CARES Act, many states still refused to provide them with PUA either due to lack of clarity of the law or because, without regular salaried work, they had a difficult time proving a steady source of pre-pandemic income.

As a second hurdle, many freelance creators' applications for PUA relief were denied because they had a small amount of W-2 income, and their states required them to apply for unemployment rather than PUA. Most freelance creators primarily earn income as independent contractors on a 1099-basis, but they often take part-time traditional W-2 jobs to supplement their earnings. Many authors, for example, take on adjunct teaching jobs. Numerous states insisted on providing unemployment benefits based on this relatively small W-2 income rather than allow them to collect PUA based on the larger 1099 portion of their incomes. In response to the vigorous lobbying of creator organizations, including the Authors Guild, Screen Actors Guild, and others, Congress ultimately created a Mixed Earner Unemployment Compensation benefit in the fourth relief package at the end of 2020, but its $100 per week stipend was too little too late for many freelance creators.

Last, according to our surveys, very few writers were able to obtain PPP loans, even though they qualify as small businesses. It was extremely difficult to find a bank willing to provide a PPP loan to an individual, and by the time most authors figured out where and how to apply, if ever, the initial round of PPP funds was gone.

Much has been made recently of the lack of protections provided to "gig" workers in today's economy, but freelance creators are the original underpaid gig workers. They work on a freelance basis for a defined set of companies that provide standard contracts and low pay. Like traditional employees, these workers are not on an equal footing with those who employ them and have little ability to negotiate the terms on which they provide services and licenses. Yet labor and antitrust laws have been applied to them as though they have the ability to negotiate freely and fairly with the buyers of their services and to compete with one another for the best terms. This could not be further from the truth—it is nothing but a legal fiction with economically devastating consequences.

Creative freelance professionals who work under independent contractor arrangements—as most do in most creative sectors other than motion picture industry—do not share in the collective bargaining rights and other common employment benefits that their employee counterparts possess. To the contrary, they face potential liability under the antitrust laws from acting together, in concert, to say "no" to certain terms, demand better pay, or boycott bad actors. In most creative fields today, industry consolidation and the domination of a handful of online distributors has vested excessive market power in the purchasers, publishers, and distributors of creative works, resulting in a grotesquely imbalanced marketplace that negatively impacts the advance of both commerce and culture to the detriment of creators and consumers alike. Those pressures have exacerbated professional creators' lack of any real bargaining power.

For all of these reasons, freelance creators across the creative economy desperately need the ability to collectively demand better treatment and terms for their work. As a first step, to respond to the harsh realities of today's creative labor market, creators need the ability to band together to call out and boycott bad actors in their sectors, to request minimum fees, and to collectively say "no" to terms that hurt them all—such as requirements to work for free or surrender all rights in their work—without risking suit for antitrust violations. The laws that govern the relationship between freelance creative workers and their employers are premised on the false notion that freelance creators—as sole proprietors and small businesses—have leverage in a market dominated by multi-million-dollar firms, which in turn are beholden to the terms of multibillion dollar internet and tech giants like Amazon, Google, Apple, and Facebook. These workers instead need to receive the same immunity that employees have under Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act to work together for their mutual benefit for the same reasons that

employees have those rights.[4] For, professional freelance creators are situated exactly as are employees with respect to their ability to negotiate the conditions of their work and pay.

Until and unless the scales between the creator and the company monetizing their work are balanced, the promise of the creative economy—cherished by the Founders as the nourishment of democracy and "engine of free speech"[5]—will remain unfulfilled, and our culture—and eventually our creative economy—will inevitably suffer as fewer highly-trained, talented, and potentially great, creators enter or stay in their creative fields

Since last year, the Authors Guild has been working with a coalition of creator organizations to remedy the serious inequities against our members and all creators in the labor market for creative services and works, which, we believe, can only happen if creators are allowed to engage in concerted activity for mutual aid and support, including by being able to negotiate contract terms as a class. To this effect, our coalition has drafted a proposed amendment to the NLRA, which would give creative professionals the leverage they need to negotiate more fairly in a market dominated by a few large companies and internet platforms for whom the playing field is outrageously and favorably tilted. Our proposed amendment would add "professional freelance creators" to section 7 of the NLRA, so that they receive the same rights as employees under Section 7—namely "to self-organization, to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection . . . ." Our proposed language for such an amendment is attached to this testimony.

We believe that the Small Business Committee can play an important role in shaping the future of the creative economy by helping these small businesses close what is now a grotesque value gap between their remuneration and their working conditions and the billions of dollars in revenues and equity value gleaned by others for their work. The survival of small businesses depends on a fair and competitive marketplace for their work. We hope that the Committee will

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[4] 29 U.S.C. § 157 ("Employees shall have the right to self-organization, to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection, and shall also have the right to refrain from any or all of such activities except to the extent that such right may be affected by an agreement requiring membership in a labor organization as a condition of employment as authorized in section 8(a)(3) [section 158(a)(3) of this title].").

[5] *Harper & Row v. Nation Enterprises*, 471 U.S. 539, 558 (1985).

build on the foundation that it laid with the January 19 hearing and will consider future hearings that specifically address the issues faced by creators who are treated as independent contractors and cannot engage in concerted activity.

On behalf of more than 12,000 members of the Authors Guild, I thank you for your attention to this matter. The Authors Guild is available for further consultation.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary E. Rasenberger
CEO, The Authors Guild

ATTACHMENT

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT TO ALLOW FREELANCE CREATORS TO COLLECTIVELY BARGAIN

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the Freelance Author and Artist Labor Act ("FAALA") of 2022.

SECTION 2. Section 2 of the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 152) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"15. The term "professional creative worker" means an individual who provides labor or work product as part of his or her profession on an individual basis (or through a "loan-out" or other entity created to solely to represent the individual creator for purposes of entering into such contracts) under contract and on a freelance basis for present or future compensation in any of the following professions:

(a) writers, including authors, playwrights, screenwriters, journalists, copywriters, or digital media writers and creators;
(b) visual artists, including without limitation fine artists, graphic designers, photographers, photojournalists, animators, illustrators, industrial product designers, interior designers, and fashion designers;
(c) songwriters, composers, and librettists;
(d) performing artists and the artisans within their fields, including without limitation musicians, recording artists, dancers, choreographers, actors, dramatists, puppeteers, and circus artists; and
(e) videographers and filmmakers."

SECTION 3. Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C. 157) is amended by adding "and professional creators" in the first line after "Employees."

2/02/2022

122 Horace Harding Blvd.
Great Neck, NY 11020

The Honorable Tom Suozzi
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Suozzi,

I am writing to you as a constituent of your district, district 3, and as a dancer, choreographer, not-for-profit company director and teacher, regarding the House Small Business Committee Hearing on the Creative Economy on January 19, 2021. I urge the Committee and you to recognize the *Power* of Arts & Culture as an economic driver in our nation, the *Peril* of the Arts' lack of federal support, and the *Promise* that the Creative Economy offers towards revitalizing the entire American economy.

In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Creative Economy accounted for $919.7 billion of the American economy, (five times as much as agriculture and forestry.) I had been teaching dance to local children for the past 30 years, have been teaching dance and movement to adults (primarily seniors) for the past 10 years and I have presented educational and thought - provoking inter-disciplinary dance programs with our no-profit, extensively throughout my community also for the past 30 years. I have enriched my community greatly over the past 3 decades, bringing creativity, art experiences and joy to countless individuals.

Despite its contributions to America's economic success, however, the Arts & Culture sector has failed to receive much needed support. Estimated losses to the creative industries as a whole from the COVID-19 pandemic are 2.7 million jobs and more than $150 billion in sales. As early as June of 2020, research showed that foot traffic had declined in consumer areas as much as 60%, only 7% of which could be attributed to government lockdowns. Theaters and other performing arts venues were the hardest hit of all establishments, but our state government voted to lift the lockdown and end COVID-related unemployment benefits.

The Arts are primed and ready to help America recover from the pandemic. Arts jobs have a significant multiplier effect; in rural areas, higher Arts employment per capita gives an even larger boost to overall employment than in urban areas. In short, the more Arts workers you have, the more jobs you have, period.

I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector, and create a Department and Secretary of Arts & Culture to represent this vital sector of the U.S. economy. Please allow for generosity in funding and grants this year of rebuilding of the arts sector.

Sincerely,

Beth Jucovy
Dance Visions NY

BLUE contemporary

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(In Memoriam)

Executive Director
Mary Heathcott

The Honorable Lloyd Doggett
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Doggett:

I am writing to you as a constituent of your district, TX-35 and as the Executive Director of Blue Star Contemporary, regarding the House Small Business Committee Hearing on the Creative Economy on January 19, 2021. I urge the Committee and you to recognize the *Power* of Arts & Culture as an economic driver in our nation, the *Peril* of the Arts' lack of federal support, and the *Promise* that the Creative Economy offers towards revitalizing the entire American economy.

In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Creative Economy accounted for $919.7 billion of the American economy, (five times as much as agriculture and forestry.) In Texas, the economic impact in 2019 was $6.1 billion, generating nearly $380 million in state sales tax, and employing more than 800,000 people - one in fifteen jobs! The industry also grew more than 30% in the last decade.

I'm not only an arts worker, but I am also the director of a nonprofit organization that employs fellow Texans, contracts hundreds of self-employed workers who are artists, arts fabricators, security specialists, educators, and restaurant workers. We bring in more than 30,000 people to our contemporary art nonprofit every year for free access to exhibitions and education programs. Pre-pandemic, we engaged more than 2M people through our offsite exhibitions and education programs in schools, after-school, and realized through peer collaborations. In a pre-pandemic economic impact survey of the arts in San Antonio, TX, UTSA economist Dr. Steve Nivin estimated San Antonio's arts and culture organizations contribute more than $4.8 billion to our local economy.

Despite its contributions to Texas' and America's economic success, however, the Arts & Culture sector has failed to receive much needed support. Estimated losses to the creative industries as a whole from the COVID-19 pandemic are 2.7 million jobs and more than $150 billion in sales. In San Antonio, we have joined our peer leaders of arts and culture organizations to establish Culture and Arts United for San Antonio (CAUSA) as a collective support and advocacy group made up of more than 40 arts leaders to ensure our community's rich arts and culture resources survive even though we were all tremendously hard hit by the pandemic.

The total economic impact of COVID-19 revenue losses for San Antonio's arts and cultural organizations exceeds $75,000,000. This number is based on the economic impact calculation from months ago with data collected by Americans for the Arts. It is much higher now. These losses are incalculable to individual cultural and arts organizations, which will need an annual infusion for at least five years to fully recover

to pre-pandemic programming, stability, and sustainability. To date, arts organizations in San Antonio have experienced direct financial losses of $24,076,609 and 13% are not confident they will survive due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The arts are a major contributor to San Antonio's economy, supporting employment of more than 26,000 individuals, and a key factor in attracting new business to the city.

Texas's creative sector is primed and ready to help the state recover from the pandemic. Creative sector jobs have a significant multiplier effect; in rural areas, higher creative sector employment per capita gives an even larger boost to overall employment than in urban areas. ***In short, the more creative workers you have, the more jobs you have, period.***

I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector, and create a Department and Secretary of Arts & Culture to represent this vital sector of the U.S. economy including:

- **Ensure that any new provisions related to COVID-19 relief, refundable tax credits, and forgivable loans will remain available to self-employed workers, sole proprietors, small LLCs, and to nonprofit arts organizations of all sizes to support the arts workforce and communities until the arts can resume full operations.**

- **Provide direct federal relief funding to support the increased and ongoing costs of COVID-19 testing, security to check ids/vaccination records, ventilation upgrades, and other related expenses.**

In doing so, you will demonstrate your commitment to improving the lives of all Americans, the vitality of American businesses, and the revitalization of the entire American economy.

Please call on me for information and assistance in developing this important sector. Many thanks for your support.

Sincerely,



Mary Heathcott
Executive Director
mary@bluestarcontemporary.org
Office: (210) 227-6960
Mobile: (312) 287-6060

Dear Congress:

My name is brooke smiley and I guide land and body learning. Grounded in somatic education, earth sculpture, and dance performance my work engages a deepening of awareness in the body, with a dedicated practice of movement research in choreographic, sculptural and healing capacities. A ϟΛZΛZα Osage artist and educator, I am always in relationship with the history of the land and who lives here, centering truths and expressions by slowing down - valuing human and more than human - presence, language, and healing.

The impact of this legislation is integral to the rebuilding of our communities. Artists lead the way in community healing and create safety in dialogue with the opportunity to learn with support for our differences. My recent projects include Life Lines, a diplomatic land based community work seeking bodies relationship to land. It is a land based community action in partnership with Native communities, National Parks, venues, and institutions worldwide with the collaborative creation of embodied earth markers, and multisensory performance to invite a wider audience to feel a deeper connection with the land and how we care for it.

Expanding access to funding that directly supports practices that come from a diversity of artists is essential as building blocks for our generation and generations to come. Supporting resources that invite and include American Indian and Indigenous people, our history, stories and presence, will help to humanize and rematriate how we are in relationship.

Thank you for your gracious consideration to support the expansion of this reality within our lifetimes.

Blessings,
brooke smiley

Greetings Lauren,

My government name is Byron Lenair Baker. I descend from the original "copper colored races" of the Americas.
(http://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/american)
I'm a Soul Forest Earth Story Teller, Healer Coach and Warrior. Art is the only way to communicate the devastating impacts of colonial trauma on the souls of every living being.
Art is the best way to inspire U.S. citizens to make amends and heal what can be saved.
We have the opportunity. We have the ability. We are not willing.

I'm a miracle! It's taken me a lifetime to escape the belief plantations that prevented me from harmonizing with my non human kinfolk. I can help others.
Receiving CERA funding would help accomplish that.

It's difficult for me to believe the U.S. would do right by the indigenous life of the Âmericas.
But I can still muster hope. That's why I'm writing this letter.

Thanks,
Byron Lenair

CARNEGIE HALL

Testimony of The Carnegie Hall Corporation

to the U.S. Small Business Committee

Testimony of Carnegie Hall

Carnegie Hall expresses our gratitude to Chairwoman Velázquez, Ranking Member Leutkemeyer, and the esteemed members of the House Small Business Committee (HSBC) and the Small Business Administration (SBA) for their committed efforts in supporting the Creative Economy. As our nation continues to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government must adapt its approach to small business development to ensure a robust and prosperous Creative Economy, which is essential to an equitable, diverse, and thriving American society.

Background

My name is David Freudenthal, and I am the Director of Government Relations at Carnegie Hall. Carnegie Hall is a historic landmark concert hall of international renown, dedicated to presenting musical performances of the highest quality. Each season, Carnegie Hall presents more than 170 concerts, featuring outstanding classical, contemporary, jazz, pop, and folk music and musicians; another 500 events are presented by outside producers. Complementing these performances, far-reaching school, community, and professional programs created by the Weill Music Institute at Carnegie Hall serve more than 800,000 children, students, educators, parents, young artists, and adults from across the country and internationally each year. Millions more connect to the Hall digitally through our website and social media, which offer content for music lovers, educators, and learners.

In addition to providing essential programming, Carnegie Hall has advocated fiercely for federal relief for the non-profit arts and culture field since the beginning of the pandemic. Carnegie Hall has a longstanding and robust federal presence, advancing policy issues of priority to us and the cultural sector. Since the crisis began, we have built on our prior expertise and relationships to serve as a leader in advocating for the inclusion of important provisions in each stimulus package, specifically PPP and the SVOG program. We continue to work with Members of Congress to express the needs of the arts and culture community, who is essential to the full recovery of the American economy and the healing of our nation.

Benefits of a Creative Economy

Carnegie Hall, like so many other institutions, is part of the national tapestry that is the Creative Economy, a sector comprised of tens of thousands of unique arts and cultural entities. The arts and culture sector is an economic engine that, prior to the pandemic, directly employed more than five million workers. The arts benefit every American and are one of the largest sectors of the American economy, **generating $919.7 billion in revenue in 2019, representing 4.3% of GDP.**[1] Additionally, in **New York State, our Creative Economy contributes 7% to the GSP, producing over half a million jobs and $120 billion in economic activity.** Moreover, attendees at nonprofit arts events spend $31.47 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission on items such as meals and parking—valuable commerce for local businesses and essential during times of economic recovery.

COVID-19 Recovery

The Creative Economy, specifically the performing arts industry, has experienced a tumultuous road to recovery, surviving in large part due to robust relief programs such as SVOG, PPP, and ERTC. Many venues, including Carnegie Hall, reopened this past fall, only to be forced to cancel, reclose, or face

[1] U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. "Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account, U.S. and States: New statistics for 2018 and 2019." March 30, 2021. https://www.bea.gov/news/2021/arts-and-cultural-production-satellite-account-us-and-states

dramatic declines in ticket sales due to the rise of the Delta and Omicron variants. After making it through the crux of the pandemic, it would be an incredible tragedy for thousands of surviving venues to now fail.

Additionally, as we continue to develop solutions to combat the business challenges of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, incorporating the arts into public works, community development, and health care and infrastructure initiatives will leave a legacy that defines the Creative Economy as an indispensable resource for generations to come. Investing in the Creative Economy is an investment in our nation's capacity to drive economic activity, innovate imaginative solutions to complex problems, and support the health and well-being of communities.

Federal relief programs have assisted in keeping valuable arts and cultural institutes afloat for the past two years; however, as we confront the new battle of the onset of the Omicron variant, we respectfully **encourage SBA to give maximum flexibility and expend remaining SVOG funds to help ensure that these valued art and culture institutions continue to stay open.** As thousands of dollars are expended on testing materials, HVAC improvements, additional staff for testing, etc., the Creative Economy workforce is doing all it can to ensure the safety of the industry. It is more important than ever to support and fund the Creative Economy to the highest possible capacity.

SBA Action
To support the ongoing recovery of the Creative Economy from the COVID-19 pandemic, Carnegie Hall respectfully encourages the Small Business Administration to:

- Disburse remaining SVOG funds and allow for maximum flexibility to meet the need for ongoing relief. Possible modifications to the program, some of which require legislative changes, might include:
    - Creating an EZ application form and technical support for small organizations, especially BIPOC organizations, that did not have the staff capacity to apply during the initial round;
    - Providing for seasonal entities based on Q3 comparisons;
    - Lowering the 70% earned revenue requirement;
    - Providing Round 3 supplemental awards equal to 50% of initial award;
    - Increasing the maximum award size;
    - Allowing SVOG to pay EIDL balance.

HSBC Action
To further advance the Creative Economy, Carnegie Hall respectfully urges the House Small Business Committee to enact the following legislation:

- Ensure that any new provisions related to COVID-19 relief, refundable tax credits, and forgivable loans will remain available to self-employed workers, sole proprietors, small LLCs, and nonprofit arts organizations of all sizes to support the arts workforce and communities until the arts can resume full operations.

- Reinstate the Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) for quarter four of 2021 (H.R.6161), extend the duration of the credit, and modify nonprofit eligibility beyond the current "gross receipts" test.

- Support the "Shuttered Venue Operators Grant" program (Save our Stages) by authorizing the Small Business Administration to grant remaining funds, and expand the time allowed for using these grants, as supported in S.2889/ H.R. 5429, to meet the ongoing need for relief.

Additional Actions for Congress to Support the Creative Economy
Additionally, to further support the Creative Economy, Carnegie Hall respectfully urges Congress to enact the following legislation:

- Provide direct federal relief funding to support the increased and ongoing costs of COVID–19 testing, security to check ids/vaccination records, ventilation upgrades, and other related expenses.

- Enact the bipartisan Creative Economy Revitalization Act (H.R. 5019, introduced by Representatives Teresa Leger Fernández (D-NM) and Jay Obernolte (R-CA)), which would help revamp the Creative Economy through the creation of a workforce grants program to employ artists and writers to create publicly available art.

- Support increased funding and expanded grant-making at federal cultural agencies. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) play a unique role in broadening access to the cultural, educational, and economic benefits of the arts and deepen its impact on communities.

- Repair the U.S. artist visa process and support global cultural activity. The U.S. visa process currently presents significant barriers that inhibit international cultural exchange, cooperative cultural diplomacy, and hobble international cultural commerce.

- Support a complete, well-rounded education for all students through federal education funding and distance learning resources that will ensure equitable access to arts education for all learners amidst the COVID-19 crisis and beyond.

- Incorporate the arts into broader strategies for youth and community development at the Departments of Education, Justice, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and other agencies.

We wish to convey the utmost gratitude of Carnegie Hall Board of Trustees, staff, and patrons the for the Small Business Committee's incredible efforts to save the live performing arts sector. By supporting the Creative Economy, the Committee will ensure arts and culture can assist in a full recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, both economically and by allowing for emotional healing and community building. We thank you for this hearing and applaud all the work you've already done to ensure our Creative Economy can continue to thrive and grow.

cerf+
The Artists Safety Net

February 3, 2022

The House Small Business Committee
Chairwoman, The Honorable Nydia M. Velázquez
In re: "The Power, Peril and Promise of the Creative Economy"

It is an honor for the Craft Emergency Relief Fund (DBA CERF+ - The Artists Safety Net) to submit this written testimony in response to the House Small Business Committee's January 19, 2022 hearing on "The Power, Peril and Promise of the Creative Economy." Not only did Representative Dean Philips and other Committee members share powerful sentiments that demonstrate the importance of the arts and culture sector to our economy, but you clearly understand that this sector, which is comprised of many small businesses, has been deeply impacted by Covid-19.

In response to your request to the arts sector to offer policy proposals beyond the oral testimonies of our esteemed colleagues during the hearing, we respectfully submit our written testimony about serving and strengthening the resilience of small businesses in the art sector.

CERF+ - the Artists Safety Net was founded in 1985 as a grassroots mutual aid initiative by and for craft artists. The organization delivers financial assistance to craft artists before, during and after disasters and we play a much wider role in education and advocacy for all studio-based artists, ensuring they are better prepared for and able to cope with the impact of disasters, whether they are personal or wide-spread disasters. CERF+ has also been seminal in the creation and engagement with a wider coalition to build a strong safety net for artists, arts organizations and small arts businesses called the National Coalition for Arts' Preparedness and Emergency Relief (NCAPER).

Given our purview, CERF+ is well-positioned to put the Covid-19 disaster in the context of all disasters, extrapolate important issues and convey the ways in which the unprecedented relief and recovery actions Congress has taken through the PPP Loan Program, EIDL, CARES Act, ARPA, SVOG and other means provide models for both disaster and non-disaster contexts so that the recovery and resilience of small arts and cultural businesses are well-served.

From a disaster management perspective, the arts and culture sector is still in the response phase. With the devastating impacts of recent variants of COVID-19, recovery continues to elude us. Very clearly, government strategies to address these impacts are still needed in order to mitigate further loss and dire circumstances.

The arts sector is a holistic interdependent ecosystem, comprised extensively of small businesses: non-employer and small employer businesses; and gig workers not paid W-2 wages. Understanding the arts and culture ecosystem in all its particularities is critical to the design of

meaningful relief, recovery, mitigation or resilience programs. Integrating experts from the field into the design of future programs and as technical assistance providers for the Small Business Administration programs will ensure that these programs meet the depth and breadth of our sector's needs.

1. *Artists are almost all small businesses*, largely *non-employer businesses* (meaning the artist is the owner and sole employee of the business). As such, they have unique issues and needs, which require specific approaches to achieve recovery and resilience, as discussed below.
2. *Artists and arts organizations represent every creative discipline*, not just the performing arts that were showcased at the Hearing. This includes: visual, literary, traditional/folk/community-based practices such as storytelling, plus multi- and inter-disciplinary arts. While the performing arts sector has been disproportionately impacted by Covid-19, all disciplines have been impacted. Craft fairs, for example, which support the livelihood of craft artists, have been shuttered in much the same way as performance venues, but because these events often do not take place in dedicated spaces, there was no specific relief carved out for these show producing businesses or the exhibiting artists. Even within the performing arts sector, SVOG did not serve all venues -- dance venues, for example, often failed to qualify because they don't always have sound and lighting systems; even music venues that don't have fixed seating, a very common phenomenon, could not qualify for SVOG.
3. *Arts businesses are for-profit and not-for-profit*, with the not-for-profit sector often seeding the content and economic success for the for-profit. Many plays begin their lives off-Broadway, off-off Broadway or regionally. In any small business relief program, therefore, the unique needs and differences of each of these sub-parts of the arts and culture sector, as well as the ways in which they function together for the success of the whole, must be understood to successfully design programs for their recovery and resilience.
4. As well as artists, there are many *non-artist independent cultural workers* who serve as consultants, advisors, and allied workers supporting artists and arts organizations. They, too, are an integral and essential part of the sector. They, too, are small businesses.

Supporting arts and culture supports other small businesses.
Like many other workers in America, artists are often required to piece together a livelihood from multiple income sources. For many artists, the income that supplements the receipts from their art practices comes from other segments of the arts or the hospitality sector. Given the shutdown of both sectors throughout the pandemic, most recently during the Omicron surge, many artists lost every source of income. This is why *Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) is essential* to their survival.

Congress should consider re-activating PUA, redesigning it as specified below; utilize it as a model to redesign traditional Disaster Unemployment Assistance; and study whether and how unemployment benefits can be made permanent for all self-employed workers. Canada and other countries provide models for this. (see below for further discussion)

Question: Who fell through the cracks or was disadvantaged under Covid-19 relief programs? Answer: Non-employer Businesses

As a reminder, non-employer businesses are businesses with no employees other than the business owner. According to government data:

- 91% of all Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation Sector businesses are non-employer businesses
- 75% (26.5 million) of all businesses in the U.S. are non-employer businesses
  - 1/3 are BIPOC owned
  - 42% are women owned
  - Average gross receipts (before expenses) are $49,000
- A person who works alone and earns income that is not paid as W-2 wages is by default a *non-employer business.* Gig workers who are not employed by others and the vast majority of small businesses are *non-employer businesses.*

How did non-employer businesses fall through the cracks?

- **Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL grants)** were based on the number of employees a business had. A business with zero employees other than the owner might qualify for a maximum of $1,000.
- **PPP loans** were based on payroll with an additional 25% allowance for business expenses. Businesses with larger numbers of employees and higher payroll were able to get more assistance for business expenses. For non-employer businesses, payroll was interpreted as the net profit (or loss) of the business from Schedule C.
  - Like other businesses, non-employer businesses must pay their rent, utilities, insurance, interest on debt, transportation expenses, etc. before showing any profit.
  - Like larger businesses, especially in early years, non-employer businesses often defer as much income as possible in order to build up their businesses. Those businesses suffered an extra penalty in the PPP program because they showed an even lower net profit.
  - Only in the final round of PPP loans with much encouragement from the arts sector, the PPP formula for non-employer businesses was changed to allow owners to calculate loan amounts based on gross business receipts (before expenses). This was a game-changer for many non-employer businesses, including many artists, who were previously eligible for zero or very small loans and consequently no money to assist with the fixed business expenses that were available to businesses with more employees.
- Therefore, most non-employer business owners were left with **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)** as their only viable option for assistance. The FPUC payment of $600/week (later $300/week) helped bring the minimum compensation up to approximately $15/hour. However:
  - Being based on unemployment compensation for W-2 workers, it made no allowance for business expenses that almost all non-employer business owners have to pay before clearing any money. In most cases, state unemployment compensation was based on a business's net profit (or loss)

rather than on gross business receipts. Coupled with low minimum and maximum state unemployment compensation rates in many states, this left little or nothing after business expenses for many workers.

- Despite the fact that Disaster Unemployment Assistance has been in effect for many years, many states were unprepared to deal with both non-employer businesses and the volume of applications from workers of all kinds. Small business owners were subjected to requirements to seek employment, despite the fact that they already were trying to find ways to reestablish income from their businesses.

Small Employer Businesses
While not as severely disadvantaged as non-employer businesses, those with very few employees were still negatively impacted by a system that depended entirely on payroll to determine levels of assistance. A 2013 study by CERF+ of 3,500 artists working in craft disciplines found that 85% worked alone, 9% with one full-time assistant, and only two percent had 4 or more employees. We do not have this data on other art disciplines, but it is reasonable to assume that the numbers are similar for most art disciplines.

Multiple-income Earners
It is well-known that income for artists is often episodic. Famously, actors may go for extended periods of time between films or shows, piecing an income together from multiple sources. The same is true for visual artists who may labor for years to produce a body of work for a gallery exhibition, or whose income comes from selling at art and craft fairs, or other venues where income is irregular and undependable. Therefore, many arts workers must supplement self-employment income with that from W-2 sources. In fact, many employers in the performing arts field are required to employ musicians or actors for a single performance or a limited run as W-2 workers. These same dynamics of multiple-income earners are increasingly in effect for non-art workers in the so-called "gig economy."

In the PUA program, many states decided to compensate workers who had sufficient W-2 income to qualify, based only on the amount of their W-2 income-even if that was the smallest source of income. The impact varied state-to-state depending on the compensation schedules in place, but arts workers and others consequently suffered inadequate unemployment compensation.

What can we learn from the pandemic relief programs and how can we build resilience in the creative economy?
By assessing what worked and where programs fell short, as we have begun to do in this testimony, the Small Business Committee and other arms of Congress can plan for and model even more successful programs for the relief, recovery and resilience of small businesses. Not only are severe climate-related disasters on the rise but the percentage of individuals who are self-employed continues to grow. While in the arts, self-employment is often a choice, in other sectors it is often the result of employers not wishing to take on benefits programs. These individuals must not be disadvantaged; programs must be designed to protect them between times they are earning income.

In Summary: Our Recommendations

- Update Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA), which exists after every disaster for the self-employed, to include pandemic-style federal add-ons to provide families with bridge income while they recover.
- Reform DUA so it is not just for self-employed individuals whose economic losses after disasters are a "direct result" of the disaster (which has been interpreted to mean there is a physical nexus with the disaster that results in the loss of income, such as the place of work being destroyed), but also for those whose income has disappeared as a secondary economic effect of the disaster, as was the case with PUA.
- Reform antiquated unemployment delivery systems in the states to better accommodate the needs of self-employed, non-standard, and multiple income workers. Base state compensation on actual income lost from all sources and not on net profits (or losses).
- Create forgivable or partially forgivable loan programs similar to PPP for the smallest, most disaster-vulnerable businesses such as non-employer businesses and small employer businesses. For the smallest businesses base loan amounts on gross business receipts or another formula that takes into account the actual business expenses of these businesses.
- Make SBA and other applications and reporting as simple as possible, taking into account that the smallest businesses consist of one person who does not have the resources to meet complex requirements, especially while navigating a disaster.
- Facilitate Access to Federal Resources That Are Available to Other Businesses and Workers -- For example: FEMA's Other Needs Assistance (ONA) program that provides grants to replace tools, equipment, and protective gear lost in disasters and necessary to earn a living. However, this assistance is currently available only to workers employed by others, and self-employed workers have been ineligible. Make this assistance available to non-employer businesses which, by definition, consist of a single worker, and to small employer businesses for those tools used by the owner (they are already available to her employees).
- Pass the PLACE and CREATE Acts, as well as CERA (the Creative Economy Revitalization Act)
- Build a Better Safety Net for Self-employed, Freelance, or Gig Workers -- Gig workers, self-employed, non-employer or small employer businesses represent a growing, significant, and vulnerable segment of the economy. They are the heart of the creative economy. However, they work without the safety net and protections that exist for workers in the rest of the economy. It is time to envision a stronger safety net for these workers including, but not limited to:
    - Family leave and sick leave for workers who are unable to work due to circumstances not under their control such as extended illness, caregiving, etc.
    - Unemployment compensation/retraining assistance for self-employed workers who need to seek other employment due to physical limitations or business failure.
    - Portable benefits programs

Thank you for taking the time to read our testimony and consider our analysis and recommendations. CERF+ and our colleagues and partners stand ready to work with the Small Business Committee to build a stronger and more resilient arts and cultural sector.

Sincerely yours,

Cornelia Carey

Cornelia Carey, Executive Director (signing on behalf of Mr. Nutt & Ms. Schwartzman)
Craig Nutt, studio furniture maker, CERF+ Policy Advisor
Amy Schwartzman, independent cultural worker, consultant to CERF+

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CONTRA TIEMPO

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February 2, 2022

Dear U.S. House Small Business Committee:

CONTRA-TIEMPO is a Los- Angeles based activist dance theater company dedicated to transforming the world through dance. Due to COVID-19, we experienced major shifts not only in the way we engage with community but in our capacity to operate administratively and artistically. In 2020, we lost over 57% of our budget, our operations came to a halt and we were forced to furlough most of our artists and staff. This pandemic has harshly pointed out the inequalities in our system and almost two years later, we are working to build financial sustainability for our team.

Our staff and board have worked for the last year and a half to keep the organization afloat and we are still working to provide consistent employment to all of our artists. Work has been on a per project basis for most of our company members and 80% of our artists have had to move outside of Los Angeles, back to their home state.

Fortunately, we have recently been able to secure funding, performance opportunities and commissioned projects which expands capacity to provide partial financial support to our furloughed artists and staff. We've prioritized creating new ways to engage with community through online programing and performances that were supported by our funders and organizations nationwide. We've created several dance films and engaged in a few socially distant dance education school residencies. We've reached audiences that we hadn't reached before and opened doors to new collaborations that will help us secure opportunities in the upcoming year.

We've continued to create a powerful support structure for our artists and our team has begun the necessary internal process of deepening our relationships with one another, coming back into alignment with our values, looking at the ways in which we were participating in white supremacy culture and making some powerful decisions to pivot and engage our community online. We are continuing to build work but the financial impact of the last year and a half is tremendous.

We still have a way to go to rebuild and as we expand our work opportunities, we also need financial support from the federal government in order to care holistically for our team. The impact of this pandemic will affect us and many other organizations for years to come. We need accessible assistance to provide healthcare for our employees in order to support their health and mental wellbeing, maximize the impact of our programming and sustain our mission.

Sincerely,

Ana María Alvarez
Founding Artistic Director

Jessica Amaya
Managing Director

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Testimony to the U.S. House of Representatives Small Business Committee

Submitted to U.S. House of Representatives Small Business Committee Chairwoman Nydia Velázquez, Vice-Chair Kweisi Mfume, and Ranking Member Blaine Luetkemeyer on January 31, 2022

Prepared by Dance/NYC

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony, submitted on behalf of Dance/NYC (dance.nyc), a service organization that reaches over 5,000 individual dance artists, 1,200 dance-making entities, 500 non-profit dance companies, and the many for-profit dance businesses based in the metropolitan New York City area, which encompasses the five boroughs and adjacent counties in New York and New Jersey. Its areas of service are of special benefit to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and Peoples of Color), immigrant, disabled, low-income and small budget dance workers. Dance/NYC is the only service organization for the dance sector in the metropolitan NYC area, and its action-oriented research and advocacy seek to represent and advance the interests of the dance field. It embeds the values of justice, equity, and inclusion into all aspects of its operations and frames the following requests through the lens of those values. Dance/NYC joins colleague advocates working across creative disciplines in thanking you for your leadership and requesting:

1. **The permanent inclusion of nonprofit organizations in federal funding programs for small businesses, including grants, loans, and emergency relief and recovery initiatives through the Small Business Administration;**
2. **The ongoing prioritization of relief and recovery funding toward small budget arts and cultural organizations, including for profit enterprises, nonprofit organizations, and sole proprietorships, led by and primarily serving historically marginalized and underserved communities experiencing the highest levels of impact from the pandemic;**
3. **The advancement of specific legislation to support arts and cultural businesses, including the Employee Retention Tax Credit Extension Act and the Save Our Stages Extension Act;**

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4. **The advancement of specific legislation to support employment and economic development for arts workers, including the Creative Economy Revitalization Act and Performing Artist Tax Parity Act; and**
5. **The passage of $201 million in appropriations for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).**

The arts and cultural sector is a key driver of the national economy and is essential to the nation's social and civic wellbeing and global standing as a cultural exporter. From an economic standpoint, arts and cultural production accounts for $919.7 billion of economic activity annually, comprising 4.3% of the U.S. economy and contributing 5.2 million jobs for arts workers.[1] Arts and culture contributes over five times as much to the U.S. economy as agriculture and forestry, three times as much as mining, education, or utilities, and 1.3 times as much as transportation.[2] The performing arts are a primary driver of these economic contributions. The NEA reports in its survey of 8,836 performing arts companies[3] that the performing arts sector adds $14 billion in economic value and employs 122,000 people. Equally important as its economic impact is the social impact of arts and culture. As the pandemic wears on, consumers are more likely to report the importance of the arts to their well-being: 40% of consumers in 2020 noted this personal impact, while in 2021 that number increased to 61%.[4] This positive shift in public perception of the arts and cultural sector demonstrates the need for its programs, services, and workers to be supported in accordance with their economic impact.

Contributions of the creative economy are essential to our nation's overall economic health, and the losses in the creative sector during the pandemic have been and remain devastating. Arts and cultural workers and businesses have suffered losses of $15.2 billion over the course of the pandemic. Losses in audience attendance are estimated at 488 million, with audience spending to

[1] Bureau of Economic Analysis and National Endowment for the Arts. *Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account, U.S. and States 2019 and 2018*. https://www.bea.gov/data/special-topics/arts-and-culture
[2] National Assembly of State Arts Agencies. *Facts & Figures on the Creative Economy*. https://nasaa-arts.org/nasaa_research/facts-figures-on-the-creative-economy/
[3] National Endowment for the Arts. *ANALYSIS: COVID-19's Impacts on Arts and Culture*. https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/COVID-Outlook-Week-of-1.4.2021-revised.pdf
[4] Culture Track. *Culture + Community in a Time of Transformation*. https://s28475.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/CCTT-Key-Findings-from-Wave-2.pdf

local businesses accounting for $15.5 billion in additional losses.[5] In the dance sector specifically, 85% of organizations canceled programming and operations in order to survive the pandemic, with anticipated earned and contributed revenue losses of $190 million ($2.3 million per organization on average). The effects of these losses are compounding, as more than half of organizations reported that they were unsure of their ability to continue compensating their artists, who collectively stood to lose $4.9 million in income from loss of work in the dance field.[6]

Independent arts workers, who are often entrepreneurs, sole proprietors, and small business owner-operators, remain among the most severely affected segment of the nation's workforce. 95% of arts workers lost creative income, and at the height of the pandemic in 2020, 63% experienced unemployment. Alarmingly, BIPOC arts workers experienced higher rates of unemployment than white artists (69% vs. 60%) and lost a larger percentage of their creative income (61% vs. 56%).[7] Disabled and immigrant arts workers also suffer disproportionate impact, along with parent arts workers, for whom the negative impacts of the pandemic extend to their families.[8] The arts and cultural sector suffers from historic underinvestment at all levels of government, which became starkly apparent at the onset of the pandemic and remains a top-level concern as the sector and its workers struggle to adapt and survive through pandemic surges. The state of the creative economy remains fragile, and strengthening long term investments in the arts and cultural sector that correspond to its economic contributions can create a solid foundation to bolster economic growth and sustainability for organizations and independent arts workers. Despite these enormous losses, the sector and its workers remain adaptable and persistent in their

[5] Americans for the Arts. *The Economic Impact Of Coronavirus on the Arts and Culture Sector*. https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-topic/disaster-preparedness/the-economic-impact-of-coronavirus-on-the-arts-and-culture-sector

[6] Dance/USA. *Dance Comeback: The Impact of COVID-19 on the Dance Field and the Future of Dance*. https://www.danceusa.org/ejournal/2021/08/13/dance-comeback-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-the-dance-field-and-the-future-of-dance

[7] Americans for the Arts. *COVID-19 Pandemic Impact on The Arts*. https://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/COVID-19%20Pandemic%20Impact%20on%20the%20Arts%20Research%20Update%20%207-13-2021.pdf

[8] Dance/NYC. *Coronavirus Dance Impact Study Informational Brief*. https://www.dance.nyc/uploads/Covid-Impact-Study-Brief-210316.pdf



commitment to providing essential programs and services to communities, including performances, classes, publicly accessible programming, and educational partnerships.

The arts and cultural sector is vast, with workers that span myriad occupations, including performers, designers, curators, administrators, promoters, and finance professionals. **A healthy arts ecology is interconnected with many other industries, and cultural event-related spending by arts audiences generates valuable revenue in the tourism and hospitality sectors and drives spending to local businesses.** The average arts attendee spends approximately $31.47 per person per event beyond the cost of admission on meals, retail, parking, lodging, local transportation, childcare, and souvenirs. These dollars provide vital income to local merchants, energize arts districts, foster a healthy residential real estate market, and pay salaries and wages in non-arts sectors. Nationally, total event-related spending was an estimated $102.5 billion in 2015, supporting 2.3 million jobs, providing $46.6 billion in household income, and generating $15.7 billion in total government revenue.[9] Given this economic impact, it is clear that organizational closures and disruptions in cultural programming have compounding effects that impact local businesses and community residents. Investing in arts and culture supports jobs, generates government revenue, and bolsters the cornerstone of vibrant local economies.

In the arts and cultural sector, the definition of a small business varies, from for-profit enterprises to nonprofit organizations and independent arts workers operating entrepreneurial ventures as sole proprietors. **Relief, recovery, and ongoing measures to support the sector must reflect the realities of how arts and cultural businesses operate and contribute to the economy.** Nonprofit organizations *are* small businesses: nonprofits are employers, revenue generators, and service providers that are essential to the economic prosperity and quality of life within their communities. Small budget arts and cultural nonprofits are particularly influential in their communities at a grassroots level, and these organizations continue to wrestle with historical inequities in addition to the peril and precarity of the pandemic. Relief programs enacted by the

[9] Americans for the Arts. *Arts & Economic Prosperity 5*. https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/research-studies-publications/arts-economic-prosperity-5/learn/national-findings



Small Business Administration, including the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)[10] and Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG),[11] have helped ensure the survival of over 18,000 arts and cultural organizations nationally. Given the extended and unpredictable nature of the pandemic, SVOG grantees would stand to benefit from an extension of the SVOG timeline to incur expenses and expend grant funding. **The Save Our Stages Extension Act[12] would extend to March 11, 2023 the time frame during which SVOG recipients may use grant funds to cover their expenses.** In addition to extending the timeline, the SBA must consider how leftover SVOG funds, which could amount to $1-2 billion, are used to support venues through such measures as a second round of supplemental funding for current grantees or a new cycle of funding focused on eligible small budget organizations that did not apply during the initial funding period due to limited organizational capacity.

The efforts to create the SVOG program and expand PPP eligibility to include nonprofit organizations both took significant lobbying efforts on the part of the arts and culture and nonprofit sectors, and it is essential that the measurable benefits of these programs be considered in a permanent capacity throughout the SBA's programs and offerings. There is still work to do to make these programs accessible to the smallest, hardest-hit businesses that lack administrative and technical capacity to apply and comply with program requirements. **Nonprofit-inclusive funding programs in the form of grants, loans, and emergency relief must prioritize the needs of small budget organizations led by and primarily serving BIPOC, disabled, immigrant, and other historically marginalized and underserved communities in order to advance equity and grow the capacity for these organizations and their communities to thrive into the future.** These programs require comprehensive oversight, evaluation, and review processes in order for the SBA to permanently serve the needs of nonprofits in responsive and sustainable ways. In addition to these programs, measures such as the extension of the Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) can support small business operators by compensating employers

[10] SMU DataArts. *PPP Data on Preserving Jobs in the Arts & Culture Sector*. https://culturaldata.org/learn/data-at-work/2020/ppp-data-on-preserving-jobs-in-the-arts-culture-sector/
[11] U.S. Small Business Administration. *Shuttered Venue Operators Grant Public Report.* https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/2021-12/SVOG%20Public%20Report%20-%20Midday%2027%20Dec%2021_revised[508]%20(1).pdf
[12] Save Our Stages Extension Act: S. 2889/H.R. 5429. https://bit.ly/SaveOurStagesExtension

for wages paid to employees during pandemic-related interruptions and closures. **The ERTC Extension Act[13] would extend the credit through the fourth quarter of 2021.** These legislative measures and programmatic changes stand to advance the economic viability of arts and cultural organizations that remain deeply affected by the pandemic.

Pandemic-related interruptions in programming, economic hardship, and permanent closures in the arts and culture sector result in a direct impact on related industries and community members, reaching far beyond the businesses themselves. For arts and cultural venues and institutions that provide services to independent arts workers, the repercussions of organizational interruptions, displacement, and closures are compounded; losing access to these spaces puts the working lives of arts workers and the art itself at risk. **Arts and cultural businesses were the first to shut down and are among the last to reopen, with performing arts organizations also being subject to ongoing restrictions through public health mandates. While the public health goals are laudable, their implementation without corresponding subsidies stands to cause economic hardship to the still struggling arts and cultural field, particularly the hardest-hit small budget organizations**. In addition to increased expenses related to public health mandate compliance, businesses are confronting an ongoing loss of revenue due to decreased attendance to programming, classes, and performances and massive waves of cancellations during the pandemic surges. The provision of ongoing relief funding to facilitate compliance with public health mandates is crucial to supporting organizational capacity to provide programming to patrons with safety and accessibility as priorities, as well as ensuring the long-term sustainability of the arts and cultural sector. It is essential that affected businesses, particularly small budget organizations, have access to funds to comply with public health mandates. Emergency relief funding to support additional staffing, testing kits, and infrastructure related to compliance can ensure that arts and cultural businesses survive the implementation of public health regulations.

In addition to providing support to arts and cultural organizations, direct investments in the arts workforce can serve to further stimulate the creative economy. **The Creative Economy**

[13] Employee Retention Tax Credit Extension Act: H.R. 6161. https://bit.ly/ERTCExtension

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Revitalization Act (CERA)[14] is a bipartisan bill that proposes to create a federal workforce grants program for artists within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). CERA seeks to authorize $300 million in recovery investments to put creative workers to work, which would jumpstart local economies, reduce unemployment, and improve the health and vibrancy of American communities. The Department of Labor, in coordination with the National Endowment for the Arts, would administer grants eligible to government, non-profit, and for-profit organizations, prioritizing creative workers who became unemployed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. By supporting local business initiatives to employ creative workers to make publicly accessible artworks, CERA will boost local economies, increase community pride, and reduce unemployment. CERA stands to contribute significantly to the recovery of the arts and culture sector by putting creative workers back to work.

Arts workers operate within the nonprofit and for-profit sectors and are also entrepreneurs, sole proprietors, and small business owner-operators. Such ventures must also be recognized and supported within the SBA's programs, and measures to support individual arts workers can increase their entrepreneurial capacity. **The Performing Artist Tax Parity Act[15] would modify the tax deduction for the expenses of performing artists (including commissions paid to managers or agents) to provide for a phaseout of such deduction for taxpayers whose adjusted gross income exceeds $100,000 ($200,000 for joint return filers).** This legislation would serve to offset the necessary costs arts workers incur to advance their creative careers. By supporting jobs and tax reform for arts workers, these legislative measures can support a thriving arts workforce, encourage entrepreneurship, and cultivate a new generation of small business owners in the arts and cultural sector.

The creative economy is powerful and far-reaching in its scope, and the pandemic has made starkly apparent the precarity created by historic underinvestments in arts and culture. The National Endowment for the Arts is the only federal agency that directly supports the activities and contributions of arts workers and the creative economy. **Increasing appropriations for the**

[14] Creative Economy Revitalization Act H.R. 5019
https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/5019?s=1&r=40
[15] Performing Artist Tax Parity Act: H.R. 4750. https://bit.ly/PerformingArtistTaxParityAct

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NEA to $201 million for FY23 can ensure that its funds correspond to the economic contributions of the sector and can sustain new and ongoing NEA programs to provide much-needed support to the arts and cultural sector. Emergency NEA appropriations of $75 million through the CARES Act and $135 million through the American Rescue Plan Act contributed $52 million in funding for state and jurisdictional arts agencies and regional arts organizations and grants totaling $20.2 million to 66 local arts agencies for subgranting to help the arts and cultural sector recover from the pandemic.[16] However, this level of funding still falls short of directly addressing the scope and immediate need of individual arts workers and small-budget organizations. In FY22, $33 million in project funding to arts organizations nationwide funded only 1,248 organizations for a total of $28.8 million out of 1,879 eligible organizations requesting more than $92 million in support.[17] These figures demonstrate the scope of need in the sector that an appropriately funded NEA can address well into the future.

An equitable, sustainable nationwide recovery requires long-term investments in the people, organizations, and industries that drive creative economic activity and make every city, town, and neighborhood in this great nation unique and vibrant. **By directly supporting the economic viability of arts and cultural small businesses and independent arts workers, the measures outlined in this testimony provide much-needed relief during the pandemic and ensure the long-term capacity of arts and cultural organizations to serve arts workers and their communities.** Dance/NYC joins the arts and cultural sector in reiterating the following measures to ensure the longevity of small businesses and arts workers that have long been essential parts of our communities. Arts and culture can lead the nation's economic recovery, and these investments can help ensure their resilience, growth, and long-term survival.

For Dance/NYC and its constituents, the most urgent priorities are:

[16] National Endowment for the Arts. *National Endowment for the Arts on COVID-19.* https://www.arts.gov/about/nea-on-covid-19

[17] National Endowment for the Arts. *National Endowment for the Arts Announces Over $33 Million in Project Funding to Arts Organizations Nationwide.* https://www.arts.gov/about/news/2022/national-endowment-arts-announces-over-33-million-project-funding-arts-organizations-nationwide

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1. **The permanent inclusion of nonprofit organizations in federal funding programs for small businesses, including grants, loans, and emergency relief and recovery initiatives through the Small Business Administration;**
2. **The ongoing prioritization of relief and recovery funding toward small budget arts and cultural organizations, including for profit enterprises, nonprofit organizations, and sole proprietorships, led by and primarily serving historically marginalized and underserved communities experiencing the highest levels of impact from the pandemic;**
3. **The advancement of specific legislation to support arts and cultural businesses, including the Employee Retention Tax Credit Extension Act and the Save Our Stages Extension Act;**
4. **The advancement of specific legislation to support employment and economic development for arts workers, including the Creative Economy Revitalization Act and Performing Artist Tax Parity Act; and**
5. **The passage of $201 million in appropriations for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).**

Taken together, these measures stand to support arts and culture as a key driver of the nation's economy. Dance/NYC thanks you for your consideration and commends your leadership and ongoing efforts to support the recovery of small businesses, nonprofit organizations, and individual workers in the arts and cultural sector.

##



The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy
Written Testimony Submitted by Dance/USA
Before the U.S. House Small Business Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
February 3, 2022

Dance/USA appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony before the U.S. House Small Business Committee in support for its January 19 hearing entitled *The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy.* Dance/USA, its members, the dance community, and its interested stakeholders appreciate that the Committee scheduled this hearing to shine a spotlight on how the current pandemic has adversely impacted the overall arts and cultural sector, including the dance community and individual creative workers across the country. It is important for the U.S. Congress and the current Presidential Administration to learn and understand the current status of the overall arts and cultural sector during the current pandemic. This information gathering will be important for the U.S. Congress and the federal government to effectively help support the sector as our nation continues to deal with this current pandemic and hopefully move beyond it in the near future.

It is imperative for the federal government to continue to support the arts and cultural sector during and beyond the current pandemic, including individual creative workers. Because of the current pandemic and the nature of the arts and cultural sector's engagement with its local communities and the general public, the sector was one of the first major industries to close down its live venues, public performances, and public events. The arts and cultural sector will also be one of the last industries to reopen. Even with the latest pandemic surge, due to the omicron variant, various dance-related companies and non-profit organizations across the country have had to cancel their holiday public performances during their 2021 winter seasons after they successfully reopened earlier in the year in compliance with federal, state, and local health and safety protocols. This stop-and-start scenario amongst dance-related entities and other disciplines within the overall arts and cultural sector is not only unsustainable but will adversely impact the overall sector in the long-term, **including employment of various creative workers who may have left the sector entirely for other sustainable forms of employment.** Furthermore, various ancillary industries, such as restaurants, hotels, and transportation that rely on a thriving arts and cultural sector in their local communities will suffer because of a lack in purchases of goods and services.

The arts and cultural sector is an important part of the economy at all levels. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) released latest data (2019 data) in March 2021 that shows the overall arts and cultural sector was expanding before the pandemic. The production of arts and cultural goods and services in the U.S. added 4.3 percent directly to the nation's GDP, for a total approaching a trillion dollars ($919.7 billion). **This amount was greater than the value added from other major industries including construction and transportation. Pre-pandemic, the arts and cultural sector employed 5.2 million workers with a total compensation of $447 billion, which does not include self-employed arts workers.**

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According to the NEA and BEA, the unemployment rate among dancers and choreographers in 2019 was 10.7 percent or 3,000 professionals. In the third quarter of 2020, the rate rose to 54.6 percent and 8,000 professionals. There is also state data released by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and BEA that reflects the major economic impact of the arts and cultural sector at the state and local levels in terms of the number of employed and the production and sale of goods and services.

Dance/USA is grateful that the dance community and its individual creative workers have benefitted from the establishment and implementation of various federal pandemic relief programs, including federal unemployment relief, the Paycheck Protection Program, Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) Program, and the Employee Retention Tax Credit Program. These programs provided a lifeline of support to the dance community and the overall arts and cultural sector, and as a result, the dance community, in general, has been able to be resilient. **However, the overall arts and cultural sector needs continued support as our nation moves beyond the current pandemic. There can be no national recovery without continued support for the arts and cultural sector.**

Dance/USA supports the establishment of a **federal Secretary of Arts and Culture** – a cabinet-level position – within the current Presidential Administration and future administrations. This leader would provide the necessary focus and attention on the arts and cultural sector as the nation navigates the current pandemic and moves beyond the pandemic. This leader would help the sector, including individual creative workers, navigate and leverage various federal programs, resources, and services.

Dance/USA supports **Save Our Stages Extension Act legislation – H.R. 5429**. This legislation extends to **March 11, 2023**, the timeframe during which Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) recipients may use grant funds to cover their expenses. Because of the untimely implementation of the program by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and to continue to deal with the current pandemic, various grantees need more time to expend their grants to cover expenses incurred beyond December 31, 2021. **Dance/USA also urges that any leftover SVOG program funding remain with the SBA to continue to support the arts and cultural sector.** There is bi-partisan companion legislation in the U.S. Senate – S. 2889.

Dance/USA also supports the **Creative Economy Revitalization Act – H.R. 5019** – that establishes a $300 million dollar program that will require the U.S. Department of Labor to award grants to government and nonprofit agencies to provide programs that employ individuals and provide public access to art or arts programming. This legislation would mitigate creative worker displacement, stimulate local creative workforce growth, create a pipeline for new creative jobs, enrich communities, increase access to culture. There is bi-partisan companion legislation in the U.S. Senate - S. 2858.

There are also other major pieces of legislation in the U.S. House and Senate that have bi-partisan support that would provide tax relief to the arts and cultural sector, including individual creative workers. We urge that this Committee works with the House Ways and Means Committee to pass and enact these major pieces of legislation that has bi-partisan support in both the U.S. House and Senate.



We support **Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) Reinstatement Act – H.R. 6161 –** to reinstate the employee retention tax credit for the fourth quarter of 2021. Various companies and non-profit organizations have relied on this tax relief during the current pandemic and were relying on the fourth quarter ERTC that was eliminated to pay for the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, enacted in November 2021.

We support **Universal Giving Pandemic Response and Recovery Act – H.R. 1704 –** to extend and expand the universal non-itemized charitable deduction for cash contributions. This non-itemized deduction expired on December 31, 2021 and was another way for the arts and cultural sector, including dance and opera companies, to secure support during the current pandemic. There is also bi-partisan legislation in the U.S. Senate – S. 618.

We also support the **Performing Artist Tax Parity Act of 2021 – H.R. 4750 –** which provides tax relief to individual artists for various expenses from their employment. There is also bi-partisan legislation in the U.S. Senate – S. 2872.

These are just some of the pieces of legislation that will directly support the arts and cultural sector and increase access to the sector in local communities and by individual families.

Thank you for the opportunity to share how the current pandemic has impacted the dance community and what needs to be accomplished by the federal government to support the arts and cultural sector, creative economy, and individual creative workers going forward. Dance/USA and the dance community look forward to working with the U.S. Congress on these and other relevant issues as the nation moves beyond the pandemic.

About Dance/USA – www.danceusa.org
Dance/USA is the national service organization for professional dance, serving a broad cross-section of the dance ecosystem. Established in 1982, Dance/USA's mission is to champion an inclusive and equitable dance field by leading, convening, advocating, and supporting individuals and organizations. We represent hundreds of individual dance artists; international touring companies; studio owners; production houses; agents, managers, producers; and educational affiliates among other dance-related individuals and entities who each contribute to the robust economic and cultural dialogue of our nation.

Good Afternoon Mr. Finks,

I am a Cultural Organizer from West Baltimore in the state of Maryland.

I have been rooted in my community my entire life. In the last 12 years, I have focused on the cultural assets of my community, West Baltimore. You may ask why West Baltimore. As you know, segregation was once a huge part of the American fabric. Growing up during this period, I had the entire West Baltimore as a place of belonging, a place of safety, and a place of community culture.

Back then, West Baltimore had Pennsylvania Avenue. Pennsylvania Avenue was out Cultural District (businesses, music, parades, depiction of all facets of a community cultural life). Additionally, we had the Historic Arch Social Club, founded in 1906 The Arch Social Club is still standing as a beacon of cultural heritage and presence in West Baltimore. I like to associate the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and North Avenue, as a visual that many Americans may know due to the 2015 Baltimore Up-Rising. We have created the Black Arts and Entertainment District that is focused on Pennsylvania Avenue.

My story and the story of many West Baltimoreans is Rembrance, Healing, and Celebration.

Our community has been impacted by many disturbing events, living events that changed many economic facets of out community We have the Highway To Nowhere, route 40, which still seems to be present in current conversations

In our statement of Rembrance, Healing, and Celebration , we have also been imagining out future through the lens of Culture and Economics. This new work is processed and engaged through a Community Leadership Council working with four partnering colleges and universities (Coppin State, Morgan State, UMBC, and the University of Baltimore) along with students from each of the colleges and Economist Dr. Fluency Hutchinson. We are gaining knowledge around economics, and imagining economic mobility using culture as our bright light of our humanity.

The CERA Act, can benefit the West Baltimore Community as we continue to life our stories, display our stories, work with Artist to further visualize our imagination, and create economic potential for our citizens and residents. Please pass the act

I have attached a document for your review of Culture and Economic work focus

Denise G. Johnson
Cultural Organizer
Director, Arch Social Community Network

Denver Arts & Venues

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DENVER
THE MILE HIGH CITY

February 2, 2022

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Small Business
SENT VIA EMAIL
lauren.finks@mail.house.gov

Dear Committee on Small Business,

Denver Arts & Venues (DAV) is writing to support the nation's creative workforce and the "Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" hearing. DAV is an agency of the City & County of Denver and serves as the Local Arts Agency of record for the National Endowment for the Arts, giving us the privilege and responsibility to aid Denver's creative workforce—writers, visual artists, dancers, musicians, actors—who contribute to our city's vibrancy, economic vitality, and resiliency.

According to the Colorado Business Committee in the Arts' economic activity study of nonprofit arts organizations in our region, the arts sector lost a decade of growth in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Economic activity reached $2.3 billion in 2019. However, the temporary closure of venues and stay-at-home orders had a sudden and severe impact on the arts community. Key metrics like jobs and attendance were reduced to levels from the last recession or lower.

Never in U.S. history have there been seven bills introduced in Congress to address and improve the creative economy and the lives of the creative workforce. These bills offer a new vision to ensure a full, vibrant creative life for all Americans. Should these bills, or their concepts, become law:

- The creative economic engine would be recognized and supported for the powerhouse that it is.
- Cultural entrepreneurs and small businesses could access the capital.
- Displaced and marginalized creative workers would be taxed and supported appropriately and centered in policy reforms.
- Creative skills development would sit alongside other essential skills to educate the next generation workforce.
- Integrating art in public spaces would be codified as a necessary expenditure toward a healthy, vibrant community.

These seven bills would improve the lives of all Americans by opening billions of dollars in investment opportunity for creative businesses and entrepreneurs, expanding opportunity for current and future workers, and boosting the U.S. economy.

Regards,

Ginger White Brunetti
Executive Director

Art heals. Born with Hirschsprung's disease, I went to a school for the physical and mental "handicap", Charles Leroy Lowman Elementary. There, in the 3rd grade, my teacher, Mrs Ida B. Holder (found out as an adult, that was not her real name) taught me how to sculpt in paint. After winning several art awards, I rebelled, after my parents bought me art supplies. I was 10.

25 years later, as a singer, I was headed on tour and decided to get a physical. I was diagnosed with thyroid cancer and eventually lost my singing voice, for 12 years. After 2 weeks of not being able to sing, I took my savings and spent every dime at Sam Flax art store. I had forgotten that I pai tas a child, but knew I needed to release my frustration of not being able to sing, somehow. I painted , prayed and cried all night. In the morning stood a six foot ballerina. I WAS ASTONISHED!!! I called my mom and asked her (matter of factly) "did you know that I knew how ro paint?" To which she answered, "you painted as a child, until you rebelled, when I bought you art supplies." I told her I didn't remember. She sent me pics and several art awards.

For the past 25 years, I never had any art on my walls at home, because I knew what I wanted. For the next 12 years, I painted to heal...mind, body and soul!!!

In 2013 my 6 octaves came back. I now paint and sing.

Recently (pre Covid), I lost my gallery, I have, for the past 3 years, over 3000 paintings in storage. After Covid, lost my home. It's hard to try to make a living as an artist, when artsy not (to some) be a necessity.

I am hoping to re-open HungrySoul Cafe, my gallery, studio and sound stage, but I need assistance.

I have included a video of some of my art merchandise that I hope to release this year.

You can hear my music at www.reverbnation.com/diascott

I am a walking billboard, artist, vocalist, poet and writer.

Dia Scott
HungrySoul Cafe

To whom it may concern,

CERA is a way for non-for-profits and educational institutions like public libraries to support local artists. Our budgets aren't always able to support art projects or concert series, access to grant money allows us to support local, regional, and national talent. while offering our patrons access to diverse programs or artistic expression

Thank you,

Elizabeth Miller
Youth Services Librarian
Westmont Publiic Library

January 31, 2022

Long Island City Ballet
44-02 23rd Street
Studio 216
Long Island City, NY 11101

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney]
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Maloney:

I am writing to you as a constituent of your district, New York, 12th district, as a director of a ballet school and ballet company, and a former professional ballet dancer, regarding the House Small Business Committee Hearing on the Creative Economy on January 19, 2021. I urge the Committee and you to recognize the *Power* of Arts & Culture as an economic driver in our nation, the *Peril* of the Arts' lack of federal support, and the *Promise* that the Creative Economy offers towards revitalizing the entire American economy.

In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Creative Economy accounted for $919.7 billion of the American economy, (five times as much as agriculture and forestry.) I'm not only an Arts Worker, I am also a business owner. For the past 16 years, our ballet school has brought the many benefits of ballet to the children of Queens, NY. We employ arts workers as our instructors, costumers, lighting designers, and choreographers. It truly takes a village to create a ballet production.

Despite its contributions to America's economic success, however, the Arts & Culture sector has failed to receive much needed support. Estimated losses to the creative industries as a whole from the COVID-19 pandemic are 2.7 million jobs and more than $150 billion in sales. As early as June of 2020, research showed that foot traffic had declined in consumer areas as much as 60%, only 7% of which could be attributed to government lockdowns. Theaters and other performing arts venues were the hardest hit of all establishments, but our state government voted to lift the lockdown and end COVID-related unemployment benefits.
Due to COVID, our school lost more than 50% of its former students and we were unable to perform in a theater for two years. Many of our former instructors were forced to relocate from NYC due to lack of work. We are still struggling as rent has not been reduced, but for safety, class sizes have been.

But the Arts are primed and ready to help America recover from the pandemic. Arts jobs have a significant multiplier effect; in rural areas, higher Arts employment per capita gives an even larger boost to overall employment than in urban areas. In short, the more Arts workers you have, the more jobs you have, period.

I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector, and create a Department and Secretary of Arts & Culture to represent this vital sector of the U.S. economy. In doing so, you will demonstrate your commitment to improving the lives of all Americans, the vitality of American businesses, and the revitalization of the entire American economy.

Sincerely,

Eric Ragan
Director

I am a 39 year old visual artist, originating from and once again resident of NYC since 2020. I lived in Brussels for 7 years and came home to be close to family when covid hit. Artists enjoy so much more support in Europe than here in the US.

Why does the US not recognise its artists and the value they bring to the culture at large and to public life?

I have struggled to reconnect with community during covid and also to find work. Grants and opportunities to show are difficult to come by. When I worked in a printshop here in my 20's, I made $30,000 a year. I have never felt genuinely supported in this country as an artist, even though I am a graduate of a top school (Cooper Union) and someone who has worked steadfastly on my craft for 18 years.

CEFA would offer my community recognition, the prospect of financial support, and a sense of pride. Art is not a luxury, for us or for the public, it is a necessity and many of us artists are struggling through this time. Support for art makes the country more beautiful, more intelligent, healthier, more sensitive, more valuable, more peaceful and more joyful.

Thank you,
Georgia Küng
NY, NY

I come from a performing arts family. I use my talents to lift community.

A few years ago there was division in Ferguson, MO.

My heart knew exactly what to do. Following the advice "Be The Change You Wish To See." I started looking for a place to serve.

I needed funding, so I went to the Regional Arts Commission, explained what I wanted to do and asked for financial assistance. They agreed and together we set up a plan.

I arranged a weekly tiny tot story time in the children's section of the Ferguson Public Library.

The local paper ran announcements and short stories. Once a week, during the unrest, I took a bus, two trains, another bus and a brisk walk. Becoming part of the community, plainly visible. Their own Story Lady.

For a half hour, we followed a set routine. Singing, movement, reading books from their own library shelves, and answering questions.

What happened? From the first day, we had a crowd of happy children. Grandparents showed up to watch. Retired librarians and school teachers arrived. Once they remembered what THEY used to do, they began arriving early, doing their own story times – and stayed late . . . . Their own residents rallied and "took over."

When my original commitment with the Regional Arts Commission was completed, I decided it was best for the people of Ferguson to continue programming their way.

The Regional Arts Commission suggested there could be more funding.

I was too shy to follow through at the time.

Now, I believe there is Much To Be Done and, if there is funding to lift and heal our communities, I could be of service.

Thank you for your time,

Georgy Rock – Story Lady

PUT CREATIVE WORKERS TO WORK

Dear members of the Small Business Committee of the House of Representatives,

The following set of proposals was created and endorsed by over 2,300 cultural organizations and creative workers across the United States, the ***Get Creative Workers Working Coalition****. A complete list of endorsing organizations appears at the end of this document and can be found at www.creativeworkers.net.*

Submitted on behalf of the Get Creative Workers Working Coalition by Americans for the Arts.

For any questions, please contact Clay Lord at clord@artsusa.org.

TO REBUILD AND REIMAGINE THE UNITED STATES, WE MUST PUT CREATIVE WORKERS TO WORK

CREATIVITY HAS ALWAYS BEEN ESSENTIAL TO EVERY U.S. COMMUNITY. To thrive, the United States must leverage our creative power, putting creative workers to work rebuilding, reimagining, unifying, and healing communities in every state and territory, as well as within tribal lands. Below, we propose 16 specific actions that Congress and the Administration can take to activate the creative economy within a comprehensive national recovery strategy.

In 1935, facing 20% unemployment, President Roosevelt created the Works Progress Administration (WPA). In 1973, at a moment of similar crisis, President Nixon signed the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). These audacious federal policy efforts—one by a Democrat, one by a Republican—sparked national recovery at two crucial moments and should inspire action now.

In each previous workforce effort, investment in the creative economy has proven essential. Similar investment now will heal the soul of America, create unity, expand and improve infrastructure, address community health, and drive innovation, recovery, and reimagination. Congress and the Administration must draw upon the creative energies of the country's 5.2 million creative workers to energize a downtrodden citizenry, reimagine how communities can thrive, and improve the lives of all. We stand ready to answer the call.

Activating the creative economy just makes sense. Creative workers are a part of every local economy in the United States and have much to offer in healing, recovery, and beyond. Paying artists and other creative workers for their contributions to the health, equity, and well-being of our communities rebuilds our economy. These workers uniquely engage communities to contribute to well-being and connectivity, reflecting back local history, amplifying the unique character of places, and renewing the civic and social lives of community members through their work. To thrive tomorrow, we must create a jobs ecosystem for creative workers today.

Now is the time to boldly activate the nation's 5.2 million arts and cultural workers, 640,000 creative businesses, and hundreds of millions of arts consumers to address critical infrastructure, community development, innovation, and public health needs. Arts and culture are crucial components of civic dialogue, and research shows that in the primary areas of concern for recovery—including racial justice,

health, education, community cohesion, and public safety—the integration of creative workers improves outcomes and sets up the community for success.

To that end, we offer the following 16 actions for consideration.

Create positions within the Executive branch to coordinate activities related to arts, culture, and creative economy.
Create positions within the Executive Office of the President that will advise the President on issues related to the arts, culture, and creative economy across all federal departments and to coordinate, for the President, the arts and culture making process in the White House, ensure that arts and policy decisions and programs are consistent with the President's stated goals, and monitor implementation of the President's arts policy agenda. This office will lead arts and cultural initiatives on behalf of the White House both domestically and internationally, including partnering on decision making related arts integration into infrastructure, education, job creation and coordination of the various creative workforce activities implemented at the Departments of Education, Commerce, Transportation, HUD, Labor, Agriculture, Energy, and State; the NEA, NEH, IMLS, and other cultural agencies; and local and state government partners.

Advance direct employment of creative workers within federal agencies and programs.
Employ creative workers as artists-in-residence, fellows, community or cultural organizers, teaching artists, and project managers, with a focus on economy-boosting, living-wage creative jobs that will strengthen our communities, schools, public health systems; beautify our infrastructure; create a full and vibrant social and creative life in communities; and lead the transition into the next economy. Particular focus should be given to federal departments that have existing workforce/hiring programs, such as the Department of the Interior's National Parks Artist Residency program.

Direct federal departments to commission artists and community arts organizations.
Capture and document this unprecedented moment in our nation's history through photographs, narratives, storytelling, murals, films, plays and other media. Creating a matrix of stories and conversations to move a moment of loss into an opportunity for grieving and recovery will aid development of community-driven responses to systemic racism, historic inequities, and recent trauma. These commissions will illuminate under-told or erased narratives and histories of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color; immigrants; people in rural communities; people with disabilities; LGBTQIA people; poor people; women; and children. In particular, expand the GSA Art in Architecture Program to other federal infrastructure projects.

Put artists to work addressing public and mental health in communities.
Support local programs that engage artists and creative workers to address community health issues; provide funding and guidelines for states, localities, and tribal governments to commission public health campaigns to increase awareness of, and compliance with, public health mandates; and integrate creative arts therapies into care for those most affected by the pandemic, including specific support for cultural practitioners from Native communities. In particular, direct insurance companies to include arts prescriptions and healing practices as covered treatment options; provide opportunities for artists to support social emotional learning and/or trauma-informed education in schools; and position artists and creative workers alongside others working to address trauma and recovery.

Complete the launch of an ArtistCorps within AmeriCorps.
Working from existing authorizing language within the Serve America Act provisions approved during the Obama/Biden Administration, expand or redirect dollars for competitive AmeriCorps state proposals toward cultural intervention, equitable community planning, substance abuse prevention, community resiliency, and direct cultural programming; advance the "new cultural models" capacity model through AmeriCorps VISTA to drive cultural institutions as collaborators in local/state anti-poverty work; instigate a "national direct" ArtistCorps program to re-employ unemployed and underemployed teaching artists to address mental health, education, and workforce training efforts; direct inclusion of cultural organizations and state and local arts agencies and tribal governments as clear partners in the AmeriCorps VISTA anti-poverty work; incorporate creative arts explicitly in the Corporation for National Community Service's senior programming portfolio; and deploy teaching artists and arts educators through the Learn and Serve America program. This work will allow artists and creative workers to use their creative practice to heal communities, drive social-emotional learning, improve cultural competency and cohesion, address trauma, and inspire new thinking in communities.

Incentivize private businesses and local and state agencies and tribal governments to integrate creative workers to envision successful business structures in recovery and beyond.
Support businesses in engaging creative minds to react to changing workplace needs, inspire advances in practice, and drive innovation around products, services, and ways of working. Use financial incentives, such as a tax credit or access to a loan or capital, to fund the positions and work.

Prioritize and incentivize public and private sector support, access to capital, and equitable funding of arts producing organizations, small creative businesses, community cultural centers, and collectives.
In particular, focus on organizations that are led by members of and/or based in Black, Indigenous, and communities of color and have served those communities despite chronic under-funding, the disproportionate impact of COVID-19, the economic crisis, and historical inequities in the arts and in all sectors of American society.

Utilize and provide resources to local-level Workforce Investment Boards to develop and deploy creative entrepreneur support programs.
Support, in conjunction with economic development related organizations, holistic programs and practices that support creative youth development and wellness and that allow young artists to design, develop, and lead programs, initiatives, and community responses. This can minimize the reaction time and create resources to intervene for both the dislocated workforce and the incumbent workforce members of a community.

Ensure that the creative economy is explicitly included in existing policy, rules, and regulations.
Without requiring the authorization of any new spending, make targeted policy adjustments to authorize access to federal funds for creative workers and businesses working in communities through bills currently under consideration in Congress like the CREATE Act, the PLACE Act, the Creative Economy Revitalization Act, the Performing Arts Tax Parity Act, and others. Adjust language in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to better recognize and support creative workers and the creative economy, authorize a Creative Economy Grants program within the Department of Labor and include explicit support for creative enterprise within broader support of Native communities. Integrate creative economy apprenticeship and internship grants into the Public Works and Economic Development Act. Incentivize the training and hiring of veterans in creative fields by altering language in 38 U.S.C. § 3116.

And amend the Small Business Act to more explicitly include creative businesses in its technical assistance and financial support programs.

Overhaul outdated employment, insurance, food, and housing policies to make them more inclusive of the more than 55 million independent workers in the United States.
Focus on (1) the permanent extension of small business programs and unemployment insurance benefits to self-employed artists, independent contractors, entrepreneurs, and workers who receive both W2s and 1099s, (2) universal access to portable health insurance for a constantly moving workforce, and (3) explicit inclusion of independent workers in policies related to affordable food and housing access.

Direct and incentivize the integration of creative workers and creative organizations at the municipal, county, state, and tribal levels during disaster relief and recovery efforts.
Through such action, support sustainability and resiliency, create a sense of belonging, improve community and public health, document the moment, and engage the public in community dialogue to process trauma. In addition, formalize creative work as an anchor of innovative transportation initiatives, improve education, document the time, beautify and make sense of places, develop media and awareness campaigns related to health and recovery, curate free and low-cost cultural opportunities, and engage the public in essential community dialogue.

Integrate artists and culture workers into critical, long-term community recovery planning.
Revise FEMA's various Emergency Support Functions and enable national cooperative agreements with national, state, local, and tribal arts organizations and agencies to organize and deploy artists as support mechanisms for localized recovery planning and community input processes.

Improve treatment of creative workers and businesses within the federal disaster response structure for all declared disasters.
Ensure that creative entrepreneurs are treated fairly in terms of the federal add-on to state unemployment compensation for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA); pursue regulatory action to eliminate FEMA ineligibility for self-employed workers for Other Needs Assistance (ONA) tool replacement and eliminate means testing; base the DUA for self-employed workers on business receipts rather than net profit; and end the practice of counting gross receipts against net profit when reducing DUA compensation.

Expand opportunities and lower barriers for public access to cultural experiences and venues.
Support cultural organizations and commission free community entertainment, engagement, and partnership opportunities, which can provide community cultural nexus points and valuable social and mental health benefits to community residents. In addition, during recovery and as required, incentivize local and state public and private investment to help cultural venues adapt their facilities and digital platforms, and to generally provide safe settings for family learning, performances, and wellness programs. These efforts will allow organizations to deliver on their missions in new ways, such as by providing temporary alternate sites for public schools, provide affordable cultural experiences, employ creative workers, and address community health needs, while also reinforcing the essential value of cultural organizations to the fabric of the community.

Support and incentivize private, state, local, and tribal philanthropic investment in arts-based education and educators.

Through federal funds distributions and guidelines, matching grants, forgivable loans, and other available mechanisms, including possible extension of the universal charitable deduction, support the arts in both schools and community cultural spaces, including arts-integrated teaching, place-based arts and cultural practice, intergenerational education, oral histories, and the preservation of folk traditions that elevate a community's history and culture, including on tribal lands.

Prioritize digital training, access, and connectivity to enhance the connection between artists and all Americans.

Direct and fund the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities to underwrite the local- and state-level creation of digital job-training and skill-building support programs for artists and creative workers to build digital capacity within the arts. Through such initiatives, modeled on the Digital Strategy Funds currently active in England and Canada, strengthen cultural workers' understanding and engagement with the digital world; document and share creative work in new forms and with new audiences; stimulate the digital transformation of the creative sector; and amplify voices responding to the cultural and social changes of the moment. More broadly, invest in broadband access for all and prioritize digital equity, particularly in rural and Native communities, which will improve creative connectivity and access.

Signatories

State	City	Signatory
AK	Haines	Katie Ione Craney, Haines, AK
AL	Auburn	Amy Miller, Auburn, AL
AL	Birmingham	Virginia Samford Theatre, Birmingham, AL (signatory: Catherine Gilmore)
AL	Birmingham	David Mathews, Birmingham , AL
AL	Huntsville	Arts Huntsville, Huntsville, AL (signatory: Allison Dillon-Jauken)
AL	Montgomery	Alabama Arts Alliance, Montgomery, AL (signatory: Donna Russell)
AL	Montgomery	Alabama Insitute for Education in the Arts, Montgomery, AL (signatory: Randy Foster)
AL	Montgomery	Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Montgomery, AL (signatory: Todd Schmidt)
AL	Montgomery	Shanley Aumiller, Montgomery, AL
AL	Montgomery	Christopher Greenman, Montgomery, AL
AL	Montgomery	Eve Loeb, Montgomery, AL
AL	Montgomery	James Mashburn, Montgomery, AL
AL	Montgomery	Katie An Siegel, Montgomery, AL
AL	Northport	Kentuck Art Center, Northport, AL (signatory: Amy Echols)

AR	Conway	Stephanie Vanderslice, Conway, AR
AR	Fayetteville	Walton Arts Center, Fayetteville, AR (signatory: Peter Lane)
AR	Fayetteville	Andrea Newby, Fayetteville, AR
AR	Fayetteville	Dede Peters, Fayetteville, AR
AR	Fayetteville	Jake Hertzog, Fayetteville , AR
AR	Jonesboro	Claire Abernathy, Jonesboro, AR
AR	Little Rock	Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock, AR (signatory: Victoria Ramirez)
AR	Little Rock	Ballet Arkansas, Little Rock, AR (signatory: Michael Fothergill)
AR	Little Rock	City of Little Rock, Little Rock, AR (signatory: Scott Carter)
AR	Little Rock	Scott Whiteley Carter, Little Rock, AR
AR	North Little Rock	Arkansas Artist Association, North Little Rock, AR (signatory: Mitchell McClenney)
AZ	Chandler	Cescily Washington , Chandler , AZ
AZ	Fountain Hills	Patricia Alberti Performing Artists Management, Fountain Hills, AZ (signatory: Patricia Alberti)
AZ	Gloucester	National Basketry Organization, Gloucester, AZ (signatory: Carol Eckert)
AZ	Mesa	Arizona Presenters Alliance, Mesa, AZ (signatory: Ally Haynes-Hamblen)
AZ	Peoria	Susan Hardiman, Peoria, AZ
AZ	Phoenix	Arizona Citizens for the Arts, Phoenix, AZ (signatory: Joseph Benesh)
AZ	Phoenix	Onyx Art Gallery, LLC., Phoenix, AZ (signatory: Kathi Williams)
AZ	Phoenix	Korbi Adams, Phoenix, AZ
AZ	Phoenix	Catherine "Rusty" Foley, Phoenix, AZ
AZ	Phoenix	Haley Honeman, Phoenix, AZ
AZ	Prescott	Carol Hettenbach, Prescott, AZ
AZ	Scottsdale	Scottsdale Arts, Scottsdale, AZ (signatory: Gerd Wuestemann)
AZ	Tempe	Herberger Institute for Design & the Arts at Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ (signatory: Jennifer Cole)
AZ	Tempe	Urban Landscape Sustainability, Tempe, AZ (signatory: Janet Waibel)
AZ	Tempe	Jennifer Cole, Tempe, AZ
AZ	Tempe	Douglas Ryan, Tempe, AZ

AZ	Tucson	Center for Performance and Civic Practice, Tucson, AZ (signatory: Michael Rohd)
AZ	Tucson	Temple of MA, LLC - Sacred Art and Spirituality Center, Tucson, AZ (signatory: Felicitas Sokec)
AZ	Tucson	Tyler Meier, Tucson, AZ
AZ	Tucson	Theresa Morrison, Tucson, AZ
AZ	Yuma	Yuma Art Center, Yuma, AZ (signatory: Lindsay Benacka)
CA	Aliso Viejo	Soka Performing Arts Center, Aliso Viejo, CA (signatory: Renee Bodie)
CA	Anaheim	KidSingers, Anaheim, CA (signatory: Paul Mcneff)
CA	Arcata	Melanie Zapper, Arcata, CA
CA	Berkeley	Apex Express, Berkeley, CA (signatory: Miko Lee)
CA	Berkeley	Teaching Artists Guild, Berkeley, CA (signatory: Miko Lee)
CA	Berkeley	Joy Tang, Berkeley, CA
CA	Berkeley	Sasha Fossel , Berkeley , CA
CA	Beverly Hills	Quick Culture, Beverly Hills, CA (signatory: Ellen Greenberg)
CA	Brooklyn	Elsie Management, Brooklyn, CA (signatory: Laura Colby)
CA	Buena Park	Jane Lynch, Buena Park, CA
CA	Burbank	Natalie Aldrich, Burbank, CA
CA	Cardiff by the Sea	San Diego Visual Arts Network, Cardiff by the Sea, CA (signatory: Patricia Frischer)
CA	Carmichael	Dina Howard, Carmichael, CA
CA	Cerritos	Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, Cerritos, CA (signatory: Tom Hamilton)
CA	Charlotte	Holly Whisman, Charlotte, CA
CA	Chico	Porter Publishing, Chico, CA (signatory: Anthony Porter)
CA	Chico	UCEF - Friends of the Arts, Chico, CA (signatory: Debra Lucero)
CA	Claremont	Juliana Rubenson, Claremont , CA
CA	Concors	B8 Theatre Company, Concors, CA (signatory: JanLee Marshall)
CA	Corona	Deborah Bradford, Corona, CA
CA	Costa	South Coast Repertory, Costa, CA (signatory: Paula Tomei)
CA	Costa Mesa	Paula Tomei, Costa Mesa, CA

CA	Culver City	Corrina Peipon, Culver City, CA
CA	Culver City	Joanne Webb, Culver City, CA
CA	Escondido	Jeremy Lapp, Escondido, CA
CA	Escondido	Leslie Wilton, Escondido, CA
CA	Eureka	Ink People, Inc., Eureka, CA (signatory: Libby Maynard)
CA	Eureka	Libby Maynard, Eureka, CA
CA	Fairfax	Blackpowder Graphics, Inc., Fairfax, CA (signatory: Sawyer Rose)
CA	Foster City	Fuse Theatre, Foster City, CA (signatory: Stacey Ardelean)
CA	Fresno	Alliance for California Traditional Arts, Fresno, CA (signatory: Amy Kitchener)
CA	Fullerton	Madeleine Thompson, Fullerton, CA
CA	Glendale	Aranjuez Artists Inc, Glendale, CA (signatory: Sean Samimi)
CA	Glendale	Tigerlily Print Studio , Glendale , CA (signatory: Candace Metzger)
CA	Half Moon Bay	kathryn murdock, Half Moon Bay, CA
CA	Hesperia	Christeen Street Studios, Hesperia, CA (signatory: Christeen Donnelly)
CA	Houston	Syren Music Group, Houston, CA (signatory: Ashley Mcbride)
CA	Irvine	Emma Trammell, Irvine, CA
CA	Joshua Tree	Mil-Tree Veteran Project, Joshua Tree, CA (signatory: Cheryl Montelle)
CA	Joshua Tree	Morongo Basin Cultural Arts Council, Inc., Joshua Tree, CA (signatory: Marcia Geiger)
CA	Kansas City	Mid-America Arts Alliance, Kansas City, CA (signatory: Todd Stein)
CA	Laguna Beach	Dylan Russell, Laguna Beach, CA
CA	Laguna Hills	Orange County Ballet Theater, Laguna Hills, CA (signatory: Jennifer Kulev)
CA	Long Beach	Arts Council for Long Beach, Long Beach, CA (signatory: Griselda Suarez)
CA	Long Beach	Long Beach Playhouse, Long Beach, CA (signatory: Madison Mooney)
CA	Long Beach	Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, CA (signatory: Lourdes Ramos)
CA	Long Beach	Melissa Arellano, Long Beach, CA
CA	Long Beach	Debra Arviso, Long Beach, CA
CA	Long Beach	Sheriann Ki Sun Burnham, Long Beach, CA
CA	Long Beach	Monica Fernandez, Long Beach, CA

CA	Long Beach	Monica Fernandez, Long Beach, CA
CA	Loomis	McLaughlin Studios of Music, Dance, Theatre Arts, Loomis, CA (signatory: Nancie McLaughlin)
CA	Loomis	McLaughlin Theatre Company, Loomis, CA (signatory: Nancie McLaughlin)
CA	Los Alamitos	Monica Fernandez ZuÃ±iga, Los Alamitos, CA
CA	Los Altos	Robert DiMatteo, Los Altos, CA
CA	Los Altos Hills	Randy Salim, Los Altos Hills, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Arts for LA, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Gustavo Herrera)
CA	Los Angeles	Association of California Symphony Orchestras, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Sarah Weber)
CA	Los Angeles	Beacon Economics, LLC, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Adam Fowler)
CA	Los Angeles	Bernard Brown/bbmoves, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Bernard Brown)
CA	Los Angeles	Cadence Arts Network, Inc., Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Rachel Cohen)
CA	Los Angeles	Center for the Art of Performance at UCLA, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Kristy Edmunds)
CA	Los Angeles	Center Theatre Group, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Meghan Pressman)
CA	Los Angeles	City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: DANIELLE BRAZELL)
CA	Los Angeles	Dance Resource Center, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Felicia Rosenfeld)
CA	Los Angeles	Debra Scacco Studio, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Debra Scacco)
CA	Los Angeles	Dennis Ritz Artists' Representative, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Dennis Ritz)
CA	Los Angeles	Harmony Artists, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Jerry Ross)
CA	Los Angeles	JazzAntiqua Dance & Music Ensemble, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Pat Taylor)
CA	Los Angeles	Ken Morris Project, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Ken Morris)
CA	Los Angeles	Leimert Park Village, Inc., Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Terry Scott)
CA	Los Angeles	Los Angeles Artist Census, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Tatiana Vahan)
CA	Los Angeles	Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Ben Johnson)

CA	Los Angeles	Los Angeles Master Chorale, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Jean Davidson)
CA	Los Angeles	Los Angeles Opera, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Marlinda Menashe)
CA	Los Angeles	Los Angeles Philharmonic Association, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Leni Boorstin)
CA	Los Angeles	Lucy Pollak Public Relations, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Lucy Pollak)
CA	Los Angeles	Mortimer & Mimi Levitt Foundation, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Sharon Yazowski)
CA	Los Angeles	Music Forward Foundation, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Nazanin Fatemian)
CA	Los Angeles	REACH for Community, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Trevor Davis)
CA	Los Angeles	Sara Daleiden Consulting, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: sara daleiden)
CA	Los Angeles	The Fountain Theatre, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Simon Levy)
CA	Los Angeles	The Industry, Los Angeles, CA (signatory: Adrienne Andisheh)
CA	Los Angeles	Annette Bening, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Leticia Buckley, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Jean Davidson, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Emilia Donovan, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Kristy Edmunds, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Cornelia Emerson, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Scott Enge, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Linda Essig, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Kathleen Gonzales, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Katherine Harvath , Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Charmaine Jefferson, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Liza Lou, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Patricia MacKay, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Lauren Mcdaniel, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Corisa Moreno, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Mitch Rice, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Shannon Scrofano, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Katherine Waddell, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Emily Zaiden, Los Angeles, CA
CA	Los Angeles	Jalisa Booker , Los Angeles , CA
CA	Los Angeles	Gina Gatto, Los Angeles , CA
CA	Los Angeles	Lianne Jedeikin, Los Angeles , CA
CA	Marina Del Rey	Tara Packer, Marina Del Rey, CA

CA	Menlo Park	Eliza Thomas, Menlo Park, CA
CA	Middletown	Middletown Art Center, Middletown, CA (signatory: Lisa Kaplan)
CA	Mill Valley	International Connector, Mill Valley, CA (signatory: Marti Grimminck)
CA	Mill Valley	Marin Theatre Company, Mill Valley, CA (signatory: Jasson Minadakis)
CA	Mill Valley	Denmo Ibrahim, Mill Valley, CA
CA	Mountain View	Michael Kasperzak, Mountain View, CA
CA	National City	A Reason To Survive, National City, CA (signatory: Natalia Rogers)
CA	Nevada City	Meadow Makovkin, Nevada City, CA
CA	North Hollywood	Nicole Fogelman, North Hollywood, CA
CA	Northridge	Maureen Winick, Northridge, CA
CA	Novato	Kate Lesta, Novato, CA
CA	Oakland	City of Oakland Cultural Affairs Division, Oakland, CA (signatory: Roberto Whang)
CA	Oakland	Helicon Collaborative, Oakland, CA (signatory: Alexis Frasz)
CA	Oakland	Roque Batty, Oakland, CA
CA	Oakland	Steve Bronson, Oakland, CA
CA	Oakland	Patrick Holligan, Oakland, CA
CA	Oakland	Annie Ledbury, Oakland, CA
CA	Oakland	Branice Mckenzie, Oakland, CA
CA	Oceanside	Sean-Michael Gettys, Oceanside, CA
CA	Ojai	Arts for Biden, Ojai, CA (signatory: Sonia Chala Tower)
CA	Ojai	Elaine Unzicker, Ojai, CA
CA	Palo Alto	Elise DeMarzo, Palo Alto, CA
CA	Pasadena	Fulcrum Arts, Pasadena, CA (signatory: Robert Crouch)
CA	Pasadena	Pasadena Playhouse, Pasadena, CA (signatory: Danny Feldman)
CA	Pasadena	Spectacle INC, Pasadena, CA (signatory: Yolanda Sepulveda)
CA	pasadena	Alicia Gorecki, pasadena , CA
CA	Petaluma	Jacob Yarrow, Petaluma, CA
CA	Philadelphia	Mary Graham, Philadelphia, CA
CA	Point Reyes Station	Huntergatherer artifacts, Point Reyes Station, CA (signatory: Hunter Wallof)
CA	Pomona	American Museum of Ceramic Art, Pomona, CA (signatory: Beth Ann Gerstein)
CA	Portola Valley	Dorothy R. Saxe, Portola Valley, CA

CA	Portola Valley	Jan Schachter, Portola Valley, CA
CA	Richmond	Calling Up Justice, Richmond, CA (signatory: Claudia Alick)
CA	Riverside	Riverside Arts Council, Riverside, CA (signatory: Patrick Brien)
CA	Sacramento	Californians for the Arts/California Arts Advocates, Sacramento, CA (signatory: Julie Baker)
CA	San Bernardino	Arts Connection - the Arts Council of San Bernardino County, San Bernardino, CA (signatory: Jennifer Kane)
CA	San Bernardino	San Bernardino Generation Now, San Bernardino, CA (signatory: Michael Segura)
CA	San Diego	Center for World Music, San Diego, CA (signatory: Monica Emery)
CA	San Diego	City of San Diego Office of the Mayor, San Diego, CA (signatory: Jonathon Glus)
CA	San Diego	National Organization for Arts in Health, San Diego, CA (signatory: Naj Wikoff)
CA	San Diego	San Diego Regional Arts & Culture Coalition, San Diego, CA (signatory: Theresa Kosen)
CA	San Diego	Space 4 Art, San Diego, CA (signatory: Jennifer de Poyen)
CA	San Diego	The Old Globe, San Diego, CA (signatory: Timothy Shields)
CA	San Diego	Women's Museum of California , San Diego, CA (signatory: Felicia Sgaw)
CA	San Diego	Katie Barry, San Diego, CA
CA	San Diego	Sharon DuBois, San Diego, CA
CA	San Diego	Becca Duhaime, San Diego, CA
CA	San Diego	Paul Espinosa, San Diego, CA
CA	San Diego	emily fleet, San Diego, CA
CA	San Diego	Taylor Fox, San Diego, CA
CA	San Diego	Robin McNulty, San Diego, CA
CA	San Francisco	American Conservatory Theater, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Jennifer Bielstein)
CA	San Francisco	Arts Education Alliance of the Bay Area, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Indi McCasey)
CA	San Francisco	Cheryl Derricotte Studio, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Cheryl Derricotte)
CA	San Francisco	Circuit Network, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Nola Mariano)

CA	San Francisco	SAGE Artists, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Gail Schickele)
CA	San Francisco	San Francisco Arts Alliance, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Marni Cook)
CA	San Francisco	Startup Art Fair, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Ray Beldner)
CA	San Francisco	Terry Ow-Wing Designs, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Terry Ow-Wing)
CA	San Francisco	The Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Lori Starr)
CA	San Francisco	Theatre Bay Area, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Brad Erickson)
CA	San Francisco	Unbound Artists LLC, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Gregory Kastelman)
CA	San Francisco	Vogl Consulting, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Marc Vogl)
CA	San Francisco	Yerba Buena Center For The Arts, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Deborah Cullinan)
CA	San Francisco	Yerba Buena Gardens Festival, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Linda Lucero)
CA	San Francisco	Youth Speaks, San Francisco, CA (signatory: Cristy Johnston Limon)
CA	San Francisco	Margaret Grisz-Dow, San Francisco, CA
CA	San Francisco	Jonathan Moscone, San Francisco, CA
CA	San Francisco	Lisa B Podos, San Francisco, CA
CA	San Francisco	Amy Prosser, San Francisco, CA
CA	San Francisco	Ryan Seffinger, San Francisco, CA
CA	San Francisco	Lori Starr, San Francisco, CA
CA	San Francisco	Eric Wallner, San Francisco, CA
CA	San Francisco	Sean Waugh, San Francisco, CA
CA	San Francisco	Kevin Landesman, San Francisco , CA
CA	San Jose	San Jose Arts Advocates, San Jose, CA (signatory: Ron Muriera)
CA	San Jose	San Jose Jazz, San Jose, CA (signatory: Brendan Rawson)
CA	San Jose	San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs, San Jose, CA (signatory: Kerry Adams Hapner)
CA	San Jose	Silicon Valley Creates, San Jose, CA (signatory: Alexandra Urbanowski)
CA	San Jose	Kerry Adams Hapner, San Jose, CA
CA	San Jose	Lisa Laymon, San Jose, CA
CA	San Jose	Ron Muriera, San Jose, CA
CA	San Juan Capistrano	Susie Rubenstein, San Juan Capistrano, CA

CA	San Luis Obispo	California Presenters, San Luis Obispo, CA (signatory: Melanie Weir)
CA	San Luis Obispo	Denise Leader Stoeber, San Luis Obispo, CA
CA	Santa Ana	David Lieberman Artists' Representatives, Santa Ana, CA (signatory: Allen Moon)
CA	Santa Ana	OC Crazies, Santa Ana, CA (signatory: Cherie Kerr)
CA	Santa Ana	Orange County Children's Therapeutic Arts Center, Santa Ana, CA (signatory: Ana Jimenez-Hami)
CA	Santa Ana	The Frida Cinema, Santa Ana, CA (signatory: Logan Crow)
CA	Santa Barbara	Center Stage Theater, Santa Barbara, CA (signatory: Teri Ball)
CA	Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara Historical Museum, Santa Barbara, CA (signatory: Dacia Harwood)
CA	Santa Clara	Juneteenth Theatre Justice Project, Santa Clara, CA (signatory: Aldo Billingslea)
CA	Santa Clara	Aldo Billingslea, Santa Clara, CA
CA	Santa Cruz	William James Association, Santa Cruz, CA (signatory: Laurie Brooks)
CA	Santa Monica	City of Santa Monica, Santa Monica, CA (signatory: Shannon Daut)
CA	Santa Monica	VidLit Productions LLC, Santa Monica, CA (signatory: Liz Dubelman)
CA	Santa Monica	Woodworking and Art Club, Santa Monica, CA (signatory: Sylvia Schorn)
CA	Santa Monica	Debbie Bolsky, SANTA MONICA, CA
CA	Santa Monica	Angela D Scott, Santa Monica, CA
CA	Santa Monica	Kathleen Zadikian, Santa Monica, CA
CA	Santa Monica	Bruria Finkel, Santa Monica , CA
CA	Santa Paula	CreativityWorks, Santa Paula, CA (signatory: Tracy Hudak)
CA	Santa Rosa	Luther Burbank Center for the Arts, Santa Rosa, CA (signatory: Rick Nowlin)
CA	Santa Rosa	Dawn Thomas, Santa Rosa, CA
CA	Santa Rosa	Rosemary Waller, Santa Rosa, CA
CA	Santa Ynez	Sukey Hughes, Santa Ynez, CA
CA	Sebastopol	Arrington Design, Sebastopol, CA (signatory: Gerald Arrington)
CA	Solana Beach	Christie Beniston, Solana Beach, CA
CA	South Gate	Caridad Svich, South Gate, CA
CA	Studio City	Hedda Jason, Studio City, CA

CA	Ukiah	Alyssum Wier, Ukiah, CA
CA	Union City	Jade Elyssa Rivera, Union City, CA
CA	Upland	C Jilek, Upland, CA
CA	Van Nuys	Bailey Elrod, Van Nuys, CA
CA	Venice	Now Be Here, Venice, CA (signatory: Kim Schoenstadt)
CA	West Hollywood	Rebecca Ehemann, West Hollywood, CA
CA	West Hollywood	Kelly Kilmer, West Hollywood, CA
CA	Westminster	Tina Gurney, Westminster, CA
CA	Yucca Valley	Abbey Sarver, Yucca Valley, CA
CO	Arvada	Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities , Arvada, CO (signatory: Marcus Turner)
CO	Aurora	Black Label, Aurora, CO (signatory: Chris Cobie)
CO	Aurora	Vintage Theatre Productions, Inc, Aurora, CO (signatory: Craig Bond)
CO	Aurora	Heidi Mcmahon, Aurora, CO
CO	Aurora	Erin Swank, Aurora, CO
CO	Aurora	Ana Valles, Aurora, CO
CO	Bayfield	Rocky Mountain UkeFest , Bayfield, CO (signatory: Denise Leslie)
CO	Bayfield	esther belin, Bayfield, CO
CO	Beaver Creek	Vilar Performing Arts Center, Beaver Creek, CO (signatory: Duncan Horner)
CO	Boulder	Boulder Chamber, Boulder, CO (signatory: Deborah Malden)
CO	Boulder	CREATE Boulder, Boulder, CO (signatory: Deborah Malden)
CO	Boulder	Mighty Fudge Studios, Boulder, CO (signatory: Kimberly Mallek)
CO	Boulder	The Catamounts, NFP, Boulder, CO (signatory: Amanda Berg Wilson)
CO	Boulder	Benita Duran, Boulder, CO
CO	Boulder	Patrick Mallek, Boulder, CO
CO	Boulder	Isabella Maroon, Boulder, CO
CO	Broomfield	Heather Doran, Broomfield , CO
CO	Broomfield	Marie Regan, Broomfield , CO
CO	Broomfield	Libby Unwin, Broomfield , CO
CO	Buena Vista	Conrad Nelson, Buena Vista, CO
CO	Carbondale	Carbondale Arts, Carbondale, CO (signatory: Amy Kaiser)
CO	Carbondale	Carolyn Hardin, Carbondale, CO
CO	Carbondale	Amy Kaiser, Carbondale, CO

CO	Clark	Lia Kozatch, Clark, CO
CO	Colorado Springs	Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region, Colorado Springs, CO (signatory: Andy Vick)
CO	Colorado Springs	Millibo Art Theatre, Colorado Springs, CO (signatory: Birgitta De Pree)
CO	Colorado Springs	Pikes Peak Arts Council, Colorado Springs, CO (signatory: Lisa Cross)
CO	Colorado Springs	Story Creations, Colorado Springs, CO (signatory: Denise Gard)
CO	Colorado Springs	The Millibo Art Theatre, Colorado Springs, CO (signatory: James Jackson)
CO	Colorado Springs	Athena Baschal, Colorado Springs, CO
CO	Colorado Springs	April Frost, Colorado Springs, CO
CO	Colorado Springs	Tanya Griffin, Colorado Springs, CO
CO	Colorado Springs	Ingrid Hall, Colorado Springs, CO
CO	Colorado Springs	Rachel Jabaily, Colorado Springs, CO
CO	Colorado Springs	Heather Mckinnon, Colorado Springs, CO
CO	Colorado Springs	Rosario Weston, Colorado Springs, CO
CO	Conifer	Trusted Photographer, LLC, Conifer, CO (signatory: Daniel Holton)
CO	Crested Butte	Petar Dopchev Visuals, Crested Butte, CO (signatory: Petar Dopchev)
CO	Denver	Artful Access, Denver, CO (signatory: Beth Rypkema)
CO	Denver	Aurora Text Services, LLC, Denver, CO (signatory: Ann Bennington)
CO	Denver	Bill Coleman Entertainment, Denver, CO (signatory: Bill Coleman)
CO	Denver	Civic Center Conservancy , Denver, CO (signatory: Eric Lazzari)
CO	Denver	Colorado Business Committee for the Arts (CBCA), Denver, CO (signatory: Meredith Badler)
CO	Denver	Colorado Creative Industries, Denver, CO (signatory: Margaret Hunt)
CO	Denver	Colorado Theatre Guild, Denver, CO (signatory: Lia Kozatch)
CO	Denver	Craftwrite, Denver, CO (signatory: Trai Cartwright)
CO	Denver	Creative Law Network, LLC, Denver, CO (signatory: Dave Ratner)
CO	Denver	Crystal MacClain, Denver, CO (signatory: Crystal McClain)

CO	Denver	D+i Creative, Denver, CO (signatory: Benjamin Gust)
CO	Denver	Denver Arts & Venues, Denver, CO (signatory: Ginger White Brunetti)
CO	Denver	Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs , Denver, CO (signatory: FloraJane DiRienzo)
CO	Denver	Denver's Dangerous Theatre, Denver, CO (signatory: C. Winnie Wenglewick)
CO	Denver	Earthwood Music, Denver, CO (signatory: Chris Kermiet)
CO	Denver	Environmental productions, Denver, CO (signatory: Niccolo Casewit AIA)
CO	Denver	HappyMess Productions, Denver, CO (signatory: Kelsey O'Sullivan)
CO	Denver	Impace Metropolis, Denver, CO (signatory: Phil Kirshman)
CO	Denver	Marlowe, Denver, CO (signatory: David Marlowe)
CO	Denver	Mexican Cultural Center, Denver, CO (signatory: Marcela de la Mar)
CO	Denver	Mirror Image Arts, Denver, CO (signatory: Andrea Rabold)
CO	Denver	Rock a Mile Hi LLC, Denver, CO (signatory: Jim Johnson)
CO	Denver	Something Underground, Denver, CO (signatory: Amber Fochi)
CO	Denver	Sunnyside Urban Farm & Pottery, Denver, CO (signatory: Katherine Cornwell)
CO	Denver	The Covalency LLC, Denver, CO (signatory: Crystal McClain)
CO	Denver	ThereSquared LLC, Denver, CO (signatory: Kendall Peterson)
CO	Denver	Think 360 Arts for Learning, Denver, CO (signatory: Jennifer Olson)
CO	Denver	Tri-M Arts Mgmt Group, Denver, CO (signatory: Melanie Mayner)
CO	Denver	WESTAF, Denver, CO (signatory: David Holland)
CO	Denver	Gloria Achoch, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	georgina albert, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Libby Barbee, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Allie Beckmann, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Jennifer Berry, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Kirsten Blake, Denver, CO

CO	Denver	Carol Bloom, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Tara Brickell, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Linda Brown, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Christiane Citron, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Ben Coleman, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Kevin Copenhaver, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Peter Dearth, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Kellie Donahoe, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Nicole Dorsey, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Dante Dunlap, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Tess Emslie, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Sharon Feder, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Amber Fochi, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Deb Foster, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Susan Froyd, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Abner Genece, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Paul Grewe, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Jane Guthridge, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Chantalle Hanschu, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Charlene Harlow, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Betty Hart, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Jim Hayes, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Mark Heiser, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Pauline Herrera, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Amy Jensen, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Candace Joice, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Brooke Jones, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Mona Lucero, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Crystal McClain, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Christina McClelland, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Erika McWhinnie, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Janet Meredith, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Alexis Moore, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Lauri Murphy, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Emily Musser, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Tariana Navas, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Blake Nawaa, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Amy Norton, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Yolanda Ortega, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Kari Peterson, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Leah Podzimek, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Julie Rada, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Carmen Richards, Denver, CO

CO	Denver	Sarah Rowan, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Kim Sporrer, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Gary Steuer, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Jennifer Stout, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Frances Thomson, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Mary Valdez, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Raquel Vasquez, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Steve Wilson, Denver, CO
CO	Denver	Biennial of the Americas , Denver , CO (signatory: FloraJane DiRienzo)
CO	Denver	CherryArts, Denver , CO (signatory: Amy Curlee)
CO	Denver	Amy Laugesen , Denver , CO
CO	Denver	Laura Libby, Denver , CO
CO	Denver	Billie McBride, Denver , CO
CO	Durango	The Painted Playground, Durango, CO (signatory: Heather Freeman)
CO	Durango	Charles Leslie, Durango, CO
CO	Evergreen	Shelby Jarosz, Evergreen, CO
CO	Fort Collins	Arts Management at Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO (signatory: Michael Seman)
CO	Fort Collins	Toolbox Creative, Fort Collins, CO (signatory: Dawn Putney)
CO	Fort Collins	Kit Baker, Fort Collins, CO
CO	Fort Collins	Siena Dute, Fort Collins, CO
CO	Fort Collins	Lili Francuz, Fort Collins, CO
CO	Fort Collins	Jaymi Gilmour, Fort Collins, CO
CO	Fort Collins	Jean Lehmann, Fort Collins, CO
CO	Fort Collins	Solara Martin, Fort Collins, CO
CO	Fort Collins	Natasha Wing, Fort Collins, CO
CO	Ft. Collins	Jack Rogers, Ft. Collins, CO
CO	Georgetown	Jodee Anderson, Georgetown, CO
CO	Glenwood Springs	Chip Winn Wells, Glenwood Springs, CO
CO	Golden	Richard Bernstein, Golden, CO
CO	Golden	Melinda Laz, Golden, CO
CO	Golden	Sherry McEachran, Golden, CO
CO	Golden	Kevin Yoshida, Golden, CO
CO	Grand Junction	Jeremy Howard Beck, Grand Junction, CO
CO	Greeley	Rebecca Safarik, Greeley, CO
CO	Gunnison	Teresa Golden, Gunnison, CO
CO	Hampton	Glitch Witch, Hampton, CO (signatory: Prava Hines)
CO	La Veta	Amberlin Godfrey, La Veta, CO
CO	La Veta	Kenny Schneider, La Veta, CO

CO	La Veta	Anjillee Schwarz, La Veta , CO
CO	Lafayette	Matthew Crane, Lafayette, CO
CO	Lakewood	Control Group Productions, Lakewood, CO (signatory: Patrick Mueller)
CO	Lakewood	Lisha St.Claire, Lakewood, CO
CO	Lakewood	Kathryn Zeigler, Lakewood, CO
CO	Littleton	Athena Project, Littleton, CO (signatory: Angela Astle)
CO	Longmont	Rita Valente-Quinn, Longmont, CO
CO	Louisville	Jennifer Henderson, Louisville, CO
CO	Loveland	Kimberly Butts, Loveland, CO
CO	Lyons	Creative Conventions & Events, Lyons, CO (signatory: Melinda Wunder)
CO	Mancos	Lisa Taylor, Mancos, CO
CO	Manitou Springs	E11Creative, Manitou Springs, CO (signatory: Maria Navaratne)
CO	Manitou Springs	Sallie's Enterprise, Manitou Springs, CO (signatory: Sallie Walker)
CO	Minneapolis	Douglas R Ewart, Minneapolis, CO
CO	Monte Vista	Rita Roberts , Monte Vista, CO
CO	Nederland	Patrick Marold, Nederland, CO
CO	New York	Performance Space New York, New York, CO (signatory: Jenny Schlenzka)
CO	Paonia	Cedar Keshet, Paonia, CO
CO	Pueblo	Pueblo Arts Alliance, Pueblo, CO (signatory: Karen Foglesong)
CO	Pueblo	Steel City Theatre Company, Pueblo, CO (signatory: Andrea Garrett)
CO	Salida	Salida Creativity Lab, Salida, CO (signatory: Tina Gramann)
CO	Silt	Thomas Cochran, Silt, CO
CO	Telluride	Palm Arts Inc., Telluride, CO (signatory: Christopher Vann)
CO	wheat ridge	Massage Escape Denver, wheat ridge, CO (signatory: michael frazier)
CO	Wheat Ridge	Angelina Lloyd, Wheat Ridge, CO
CO	Wheat Ridge	Lynn Wodell, Wheat Ridge, CO
CO	Wheat Ridge	Debra Sanders, Wheat Ridge , CO
CT	Avon	Larry Alan Smith, Avon, CT
CT	Brooklyn	World Music Productions (Afropop Worldwide), Brooklyn, CT (signatory: Banning Eyre)

CT	Cambridge	Spark Art, Cambridge, CT (signatory: Cecily Miller)
CT	Canton	Rie Poirier-Campbell, Canton, CT
CT	Coventry	Jillian Cote, Coventry, CT
CT	Gaylordsville	Dennis Fitzgerald, Gaylordsville, CT
CT	Glastonbury	Ken Steen, Glastonbury, CT
CT	Hamden	Goodnight Moonshine, Hamden, CT (signatory: Eben Pariser)
CT	Hartford	Hartford Performs, Hartford, CT (signatory: Rie Poirier-Campbell)
CT	Hartford	Hartford Stage, Hartford, CT (signatory: Cynthia Rider)
CT	Hartford	Rajan Kapoor, Hartford, CT
CT	Hartford	Cynthia Rider, Hartford, CT
CT	Hartford	Andrew Wilcox, Hartford, CT
CT	Lakeville	Bheind the Scenes Foundation, Lakeville, CT (signatory: Lori Rubinstein)
CT	Lakeville	Trudy Kramer, Lakeville, CT
CT	Mansfield Center	Proponent of Play, Mansfield Center, CT (signatory: Jeff Smithson)
CT	Morris	GAMI/Simonds, Morris, CT (signatory: Laurelle Favreau)
CT	New Haven	Arts Council of Greater New Haven, New Haven, CT (signatory: Daniel Fitzmaurice)
CT	New Haven	Dawn Gibson-Brehon, New Haven, CT
CT	New Haven	Stephen V. Kobasa, New Haven, CT
CT	New Haven	Ann McLaughlin, New Haven, CT
CT	New Haven	Alexandra Novak Foster, New Haven, CT
CT	New London	Expressiones Cultural Center, New London, CT (signatory: Guido Garaycochea)
CT	New London	Southeastern CT Cultural Coalition, New London, CT (signatory: Wendy Bury)
CT	New London	The New London Arts Council, New London, CT (signatory: Diane Barcelo)
CT	New London	Robert Richter, New London, CT
CT	Norwalk	Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County, Norwalk, CT (signatory: David Green)
CT	Norwalk	Wilma Meyers, Norwalk, CT
CT	Riverside	Lisa Booth Management, Inc., Riverside, CT (signatory: Lisa Booth)
CT	Stonington	La Grua Center, Stonington, CT (signatory: Lori Robishaw)

CT	West Hartford	The Hartt School of the University of Hartford, West Hartford, CT (signatory: Larry Alan Smith)
CT	West Hartford	Carrie Koffman, West Hartford, CT
DC	Washington	American Alliance for Theatre & Education, Washington, DC (signatory: Alexis Truitt)
DC	Washington	Americans for the Arts, Washington, DC (signatory: Clay Lord)
DC	Washington	Americans for the Arts Action Fund, Washington, DC (signatory: Nina Ozlu Tunceli)
DC	Washington	Arena Stage, Washington, DC (signatory: Edgar Dobie)
DC	Washington	Association Of Performing Arts Professionals (APAP), Washington, DC (signatory: Jenny Thomas)
DC	Washington	Capital Fringe, Washington, DC (signatory: Julianne Brienza)
DC	Washington	Center for the Creative Economy , Washington, DC (signatory: George Koch)
DC	Washington	Chalk Riot , Washington, DC (signatory: Chelsea Ritter-Soronen)
DC	Washington	Chorus America, Washington, DC (signatory: Catherine Dehoney)
DC	Washington	Dance/USA, Washington, DC (signatory: Tony Shivers)
DC	Washington	DC Metro Theater Arts, Washington, DC (signatory: John Stoltenberg)
DC	Washington	Duke Ellington School of the Arts Alumni Association, Washington, DC (signatory: Ronald Lee Newman)
DC	Washington	Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) , Washington, DC (signatory: Michelle Harati)
DC	Washington	National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, Washington, LA (signatory: Pam Breaux)
DC	Washington	Project Soar, Washington, DC (signatory: Kaydee Dahlin)
DC	Washington	Shakespeare Theatre Company, Washington, DC (signatory: Chris Jennings)
DC	Washington	Split This Rock, Washington, DC (signatory: Rasha Abdulhadi)
DC	Washington	StandupComedyToGo.com, Washington, DC (signatory: Curt Shackelford)

DC	Washington	The PEN/Faulkner Foundation, Washington, DC (signatory: Gwydion Suilebhan)
DC	Washington	The Uncle Devin Show, Washington, DC (signatory: Devin Walker)
DC	Washington	Tonic Theater Company, Washington, DC (signatory: Kurt Elftmann)
DC	Washington	Magdalena Bailaora, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Valerie Carroll, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Sarah Counts, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Jonathan Een Newton, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Rebecca Ferrell, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Michael Gifford, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Rebecca Lallande, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Amanda Liaw, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Michael Atwood Mason, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Linn Meyers, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Maggie Michael, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Ronald Lee Newman, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Robbie Ottley, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Cat Quinlan, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Marissa Shadburn, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Sarah Tanguy, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	David Taylor, Washington, DC
DC	Washington	Magdalena Bailaora, Washington , DC
DC	Washington	kathryn washington, Washington , DC
DE	Delaware City	Lorraine Poling, Delaware City, DE
DE	Magnolia	Delaware Arts Council, Magnolia, DE (signatory: Rosetta Roach)
DE	Middletown	Sarah Strosnider, Middletown, DE
DE	Newark	Suzanne Burton, Newark, DE
DE	Wilmington	Delaware Theatre Company, Wilmington, DE (signatory: Nathan Renner-Johnson)
DE	Wilmington	Ruth Bailis, Wilmington, DE
FL	Apalachicola	Kristin Anderson, Apalachicola, FL
FL	Avon Park	Museum of Florida Art and Culture, Avon Park, FL (signatory: Leighton Skipper)
FL	Avon Park	Cynthia Garren, Avon Park, FL
FL	Avon Park	Karla Respress, Avon Park, FL
FL	Bartow	Polk Arts Alliance, Bartow, FL (signatory: Meri Mass)
FL	Bradenton	Amanda LaForge, Bradenton, FL

FL	Coral Gables	Jose Gonzalez, Coral Gables, FL
FL	Delray Beach	Arts Garage, Delray Beach, FL (signatory: Marjorie Waldo)
FL	Delray Beach	Daniella Cracknell, Delray Beach, FL
FL	Doral	Isabel Kim, Doral, FL
FL	Fort Myers	Mary Charles, Fort Myers, FL
FL	Fort Pierce	Sunrise Theatre for the Performing Arts, Fort Pierce, FL (signatory: Sharon Even)
FL	Gainesville	University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine, Gainesville, FL (signatory: Jill Sonke)
FL	Gainesville	Mimi Stocker, Gainesville, FL
FL	Hawthorne	Y-Not Theatre, Hawthorne, FL (signatory: Paul Gabbard)
FL	Houston	Houston Center For Contemporary Craft, Houston, FL (signatory: Perry Price)
FL	Jacksonville	Florida Professional Presenters Consortium, Jacksonville, FL (signatory: Kevin Stone)
FL	Jacksonville	Jacksonville Symphony, Jacksonville, FL (signatory: Steven Libman)
FL	Jacksonville	Ylva Rouse, Jacksonville, FL
FL	Jacksonville Beach	Beaches Fine Arts Series, Inc., Jacksonville Beach, FL (signatory: Kathy Wallis)
FL	Kissimmee	Neverdark Consultants , Kissimmee, FL (signatory: Paul Miller)
FL	Lake Worth	Art Hive Magazine , Lake Worth , FL (signatory: Jessica Prugh)
FL	Lake Worth Beach	Cultural Council for Palm Beach County, Lake Worth Beach, FL (signatory: Dave Lawrence)
FL	Mc Intosh	William Schaaf, Mc Intosh, FL
FL	Miami	Arts & Business Council of Miami, Miami, FL (signatory: Laura Bruney)
FL	Miami	Cultured Innovations, Miami, FL (signatory: Marte Siebenhar)
FL	Miami	Miami Dance Hub, Miami, FL (signatory: Trisha Carter)
FL	Miami	National YoungArts Foundation, Miami, FL (signatory: Jewel Malone)
FL	Miami	Performance Management International, LLC, Miami, FL (signatory: Manuel Prestamo)
FL	Miami	Cameron Basden, Miami, FL
FL	Miami	Emilia Herrera, Miami, FL
FL	Miami	Andrea Hoffman, Miami, FL
FL	Miami	Oscar Quesada, Miami, FL

FL	Miami	David Rohn, Miami, FL
FL	Miami	Christina Tassy-Beauvoir, Miami, FL
FL	Miami Beach	Disonancia, LLC, Miami Beach, FL (signatory: Yudilennis Caneda)
FL	Miami Beach	FUNDarte, Inc, Miami Beach, FL (signatory: Carlos Caballero)
FL	Miramar Beach	The Joy Operating System, Miramar Beach, FL (signatory: Betsy Sexton)
FL	New Port Richey	Linda Berghoff, New Port Richey, FL
FL	North Port	Raji Jagadeesan, North Port, FL
FL	Oakland Park	Valerie Bressler, Oakland Park, FL
FL	Orlando	FilmSlam, Orlando, FL (signatory: Jen Vargas)
FL	Palm Beach	The Society of the Four Arts, Palm Beach, FL (signatory: Phillip Bergmann)
FL	Palm Beach Gardens	Jen Scott, Palm Beach Gardens , FL
FL	Palm Springs	Deborah Veres, Palm Springs, FL
FL	Palmetto	William Byrnes, Palmetto, FL
FL	Port St. Lucie	Jessica Dadiomoff LLC, Port St. Lucie , FL (signatory: Jessica Dadiomoff)
FL	Port St. Lucie	Jessica Hay, Port St. Lucie , FL
FL	Saint Augustine	diane mataraza, Saint Augustine, FL
FL	Santa Rosa Beach	Cultural Arts Alliance of Walton County (Florida), Santa Rosa Beach, FL (signatory: Jennifer Steele)
FL	Sarasota	SoBe Arts, Sarasota, FL (signatory: Carson Kievman)
FL	Sarasota	Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall, Sarasota, FL (signatory: Mary Bensel)
FL	Sarasota	Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe, Sarasota, FL (signatory: Julie Leach)
FL	Sarasota	Elizabeth Doud, Sarasota, FL
FL	Sarasota	Van Wezel foundation/Sarasota performing arts center foundation , Sarasota , FL (signatory: Cheryl Mendelson)
FL	Sebring	Gilbert Carney, Sebring, FL
FL	St Petersburg	Duke Energy Center/Mahaffey Theater, St Petersburg, FL (signatory: Joseph Santiago)
FL	St Petersburg	Daryl DeBerry, St Petersburg, FL
FL	St Petersburg	Rachel Harrison, St Petersburg, FL
FL	Tallahassee	Florida Cultural Alliance, Tallahassee, FL (signatory: Jennifer Jones)
FL	Tallahassee	Karen Munnelly, Tallahassee, FL

FL	Tampa	Didgeridoo Down Under, Tampa, FL (signatory: Darren Liebman)
FL	Tampa	Producers, Incorporated, Tampa, FL (signatory: Craig Hankenson)
FL	Tampa	WatchLive, Tampa, FL (signatory: Craig Hankenson)
FL	Tampa	Tampa Bay BCA, Tampa , FL (signatory: Susana Weymouth)
FL	West Palm Beach	International Council of Fine Arts Deans, West Palm Beach, FL (signatory: Alison Pruitt)
FL	West Palm Beach	National New Play Network, West Palm Beach, FL (signatory: Nan Barnett)
FL	West Palm Beach	Nan Barnett, West Palm Beach, FL
FL	Weston	Kimberly Taylor, Weston, FL
FL	Winter Park	Global Peace Film Festival, Winter Park, FL (signatory: Nina Streich)
GA	Atlanta	7 Stages, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Mack Headrick)
GA	Atlanta	Actor's Express, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Freddie Ashley)
GA	Atlanta	Alliance Theatre, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Collins Desselle)
GA	Atlanta	Alternate ROOTS, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Michelle Ramos)
GA	Atlanta	Art Is King, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Aisha Flores)
GA	Atlanta	Atlanta Celebrates Photography, Inc., Atlanta, GA (signatory: Amy Miller)
GA	Atlanta	Atlanta Shakespeare Company, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Jeanette Meierhofer)
GA	Atlanta	C4 Atlanta, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Jessyca Holland)
GA	Atlanta	ChopArt, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Malika Whitley)
GA	Atlanta	Dad's Garage, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Lara Smith)
GA	Atlanta	Full Radius Dance, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Douglas Scott)
GA	Atlanta	Fulton County Arts and Culture, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Lionell Thomas)
GA	Atlanta	Future Dead Artists, Atlanta, GA (signatory: EuGene Byrd)
GA	Atlanta	Horizon Theatre Company, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Lisa Adler)

GA	Atlanta	Lady Barbara Pinson Artist, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Lady Barbara Pinson)
GA	Atlanta	Manga African Dance, Inc., Atlanta, GA (signatory: Ramatu Afegbua-Sabbatt)
GA	Atlanta	Museum of Design Atlanta (MODA), Atlanta, GA (signatory: Laura Flusche)
GA	Atlanta	National Black Arts Festival, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Stephanie Owens)
GA	Atlanta	Out of Hand Theater, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Ariel Fristoe)
GA	Atlanta	South Arts, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Ivan Schustak)
GA	Atlanta	StoryMuse, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Shannon Turner)
GA	Atlanta	The Atlanta Dance Academy (TADA), Atlanta, GA (signatory: Kara Jacobson)
GA	Atlanta	Theatrical Outfit, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Gretchen Butler)
GA	Atlanta	VallinSFAS , Atlanta, GA (signatory: Vallin SFAS)
GA	Atlanta	Weiss Communications, Inc., Atlanta, GA (signatory: Phyllis Weiss)
GA	Atlanta	Women's Caucus For Art of Georgia, Atlanta, GA (signatory: Callahan Mcdonough)
GA	Atlanta	Kate Balzer, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Saskia Benjamin, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Tony Bonno, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Deborah Bowman , Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	AnneCarole Butler, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Gerard Catus, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Jill Clements, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Laura Cole, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Katherine Dirga, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Maryjean Feton, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Becky Finch, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Vanya Foote, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Audrey Gamez, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Clifton Guterman, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Richard Herren, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Paige Heurtin, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Linda Hubert, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Barry Mann, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Callahan Mcdonough, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Leland Mckeithan, Atlanta, GA

GA	Atlanta	Jeffrey McKerley, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Deadra Moore, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Nicole Morado, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	TARA OCHS, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Mary Lynn Owen, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Stephanie Owens, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Lynn Pollard, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Kimberly Q, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Ric Reitz, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Nancy Riggs, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Ivan Schustak, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Doug Shopman, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Elizabeth Talmadge, Atlanta, GA
GA	Atlanta	Lauren Adams, Atlanta , GA
GA	Blue Ridge	Blue Ridge Mountains Arts Association, Blue Ridge, GA (signatory: Nichole Potzauf)
GA	Brookhaven	Scott DePoy, Brookhaven, GA
GA	Chickamauga	Bianca Nutter, Chickamauga, GA
GA	Clarkston	Elizabeth Lilly, Clarkston, GA
GA	Decatur	DeKalb County Film Music Digital Entertainment Commission, Decatur, GA (signatory: Shelbia Jackson)
GA	Decatur	Provenance Media, Decatur, GA (signatory: Kimberly Binns)
GA	Decatur	Jessica Cook, Decatur, GA
GA	Decatur	Olivia Dawson, Decatur, GA
GA	Decatur	Anja Lee, Decatur, GA
GA	Decatur	Rhyn McLemore Saver, Decatur, GA
GA	Decatur	Karen Paty, Decatur, GA
GA	Decatur	Lauren Searl, Decatur, GA
GA	Decatur	Chris Whittington, Decatur, GA
GA	Douglasville	Sharonne Isaac, Douglasville, GA
GA	Dunwoody	Adena Brumer, Dunwoody, GA
GA	Dunwoody	Sandralyn Dannelley, Dunwoody, GA
GA	Dunwoody	Amy Gresens, Dunwoody, GA
GA	East Point	Impact Theatre Atlanta, East Point, GA (signatory: Brenda Porter)
GA	East Point	Shantras Lakes, East Point, GA
GA	Griffin	Karen Beyer, Griffin, GA
GA	Griffin	Frances Vining, Griffin, GA
GA	Guyton	Rosemary Dodson, Guyton, GA
GA	Johns Creek	Claudia Dobelstein, Johns Creek, GA

GA	Kennesaw	Committee to Elect Priscilla G. Smith, Kennesaw, GA (signatory: Priscilla Smith)
GA	Kennesaw	Clayton Landey, Kennesaw, GA
GA	Kennesaw	Priscilla Smith, Kennesaw, GA
GA	Lawrenceville	Helen Sutherland, Lawrenceville, GA
GA	Lawrenceville	Aurora Theatre , Lawrenceville , GA (signatory: Anthony Rodriguez)
GA	Lithia Springs	ArtsGeorgia, Inc. , Lithia Springs, GA (signatory: Bill Gignilliat)
GA	Macon	Macon Arts Alliance, Macon, GA (signatory: Julie Wilkerson)
GA	Macon	The Madvocates, Macon, GA (signatory: Chris Wind)
GA	Macon	Triangle Arts Macon, Macon, GA (signatory: Ric Geyer)
GA	Marietta	Richard Burke, Marietta, GA
GA	Marietta	Lea Tatum, Marietta, GA
GA	Marietta	Angela Tebbe-Burke, Marietta, GA
GA	Milledgeville	Julie Wilkerson, Milledgeville, GA
GA	Monroe	Marc Hammes, Monroe, GA
GA	Norcross	Debra Gilbert, Norcross, GA
GA	Norcross	Chitra Ramanathan, Norcross, GA
GA	Rome	Paul Maceika, Rome, GA
GA	Roswell	Roswell Arts Fund, Roswell, GA (signatory: Becky Peters)
GA	Sandersville	Ray Irwin, Sandersville, GA
GA	Sandy Springs	Ellie Tsuchiya, Sandy Springs, GA
GA	Savannah	American Traditions Vocal Competition, Savannah, GA (signatory: Mikki Sodergren)
GA	Savannah	Arts and Culture Alliance of Chatham County, Savannah, GA (signatory: Patrick Kelsey)
GA	Savannah	Georgians for the Arts, Savannah, GA (signatory: Patrick Kelsey)
GA	Savannah	Savannah Music Festival, Savannah, GA (signatory: David Pratt)
GA	Savannah	Kellie Walker, Savannah, GA
GA	Smyrna	David Wilkes, Smyrna, GA
GA	Snellville	Andrew Houchins, Snellville, GA
GA	Stone mountain	Awalim Dance Company, Stone mountain, GA (signatory: Ziah McKinney)
GA	Stone Mountain	Aaron Gotlieb, Stone Mountain, GA
GA	Suffolk	Kkennedydesigns, Suffolk, GA (signatory: Kristine Kennedy)

GA	Woodstock	John Horne, Woodstock, GA
HI	Hilo	Susan J Champeny Artist, Hilo, HI (signatory: Susan Champeny)
HI	Honolulu	Hawaii Arts Alliance, Honolulu, HI (signatory: Teri Skillman)
HI	Honolulu	Hawaii Arts Alliance, Honolulu, HI (signatory: Teri Skillman`)
HI	Honolulu	Honolulu Biennial Foundation (dba Hawaii Contemporary), Honolulu, HI (signatory: Katherine Don)
HI	Honolulu	Kumu Kahua Theatre, Honolulu, HI (signatory: Donna Blanchard)
HI	Honolulu	PA'I Foundation, Honolulu, HI (signatory: Vicky Takamine)
HI	Honolulu	Paliku Theatre, Honolulu, HI (signatory: Taurie Kinoshita)
HI	Honolulu	TAG - The Actors' Group, Honolulu, HI (signatory: Laurie Tanoura)
HI	Honolulu	T-Shirt Theatre, Honolulu, HI (signatory: George Kon)
HI	Honolulu	Elizabeth Burdick, Honolulu, HI
HI	Honolulu	Barett Hoover, Honolulu, HI
HI	Honolulu	Denise Miyahana, Honolulu, HI
HI	Honolulu	Mary Ellen Williams, Honolulu, HI
HI	Honolulu	Lynn Young, Honolulu, HI
HI	Honolulu	Tobias Fifield, Honolulu , HI
HI	Hoolehua	Maleko Pohaku, Hoolehua, HI
HI	Kahului	Maui Arts & Cultural Center, Kahului, HI (signatory: Colleen Furukawa)
HI	Kamuela	Kahilu Theatre Foundation, Kamuela, HI (signatory: Mimi Kerley)
HI	Kamuela	Tim Bostock Productions LLC, Kamuela, HI (signatory: Tim Bostock)
HI	Kihei	ProArts Playhouse Maui, Kihei, HI (signatory: Lin McEwan)
HI	Kihei	Linda Thieman, Kihei, HI
HI	Wailuku	Maui Academy of Performing Arts, Wailuku, HI (signatory: David Johnston)
HI	Wailuku	Pasifika Artists Network, Wailuku, HI (signatory: Karen Fischer)

IA	Ankeny	Ferrone Olson LLC, Ankeny, IA (signatory: Paul Ferrone)
IA	Baraboo	McCoy Artists Group, Baraboo, IA (signatory: Larry Mccoy)
IA	Cedar Rapids	Throughline Arts, Cedar Rapids, IA (signatory: Christina Farrell)
IA	Chicago	Austin Kopsa, Chicago, IA
IA	Coralville	Mary Cohen, Coralville, IA
IA	Corning	Corning Opera House, Corning, IA (signatory: De Heaton)
IA	Council Bluffs	American Midwest Ballet, Council Bluffs, IA (signatory: Shanna Zordell)
IA	Dallas	Emily Steward, Dallas, IA
IA	Decorah	Kristen Underwood, Decorah, IA
IA	Des Moines	Ballet Des Moines, Des Moines, IA (signatory: Blaire Massa)
IA	Des Moines	Iowa Stage Theatre Company, Des Moines, IA (signatory: Matthew McIver)
IA	Des Moines	Lee Bakros, Des Moines, IA
IA	Des Moines	Montana Smith, Des Moines, IA
IA	Dubuque	Bell Tower Theater, Dubuque, IA (signatory: Miki Robinson)
IA	Dubuque	City of Dubuque, Dubuque, IA (signatory: Jenni Petersen-Brant)
IA	Dubuque	Ryan Decker, Dubuque, IA
IA	Dubuque	Jenni Petersen-Brant, Dubuque, IA
IA	Elk Horn	Robert Mortenson, Elk Horn, IA
IA	Hampton	Iowa Alliance for Arts Education, Hampton, IA (signatory: Leon Kuehner)
IA	Hills	Patrick Muller, Hills, IA
IA	Iowa City	Hallie Patterson, Iowa City, IA
IA	Iowa City	Nancy Purington, Iowa City, IA
IA	Knoxville	Jan Evans, Knoxville, IA
IA	Marion	Angie Huffman, Marion, IA
IA	New York	Local Learning: The National Network for Folk Arts in Education, New York, IA (signatory: Lisa Rathje)
IA	Story City	Andrew Clarridge, Story City, IA
IA	Vinton	Mineckglass, Vinton, IA (signatory: Stephen Mineck)
IA	Waterloo	Anita Ross, Waterloo, IA
IA	West Des Moines	Hurley & Dancers, West Des Moines, IA (signatory: Kathleen Hurley)

IA	West Des Moines	Amenda Tate, West Des Moines, IA
ID	Boise	Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Boise, ID (signatory: Charles Fee)
ID	Boise	Treefort Music Fest, Boise, ID (signatory: John Michael Schert)
ID	Boise	Anne Mueller, Boise, ID
ID	Ketchum	Kristine Bretall, Ketchum, ID
ID	Sandpoint	DW Interior Design, Sandpoint, ID (signatory: Dion Williams)
IL	Arlington Heights	Illinois Art Education Association, Arlington Heights, IL (signatory: Nick Hostert)
IL	Barrington	Sarah Hoban, Barrington, IL
IL	Berwyn	Ann Filmer, Berwyn, IL
IL	Champaign	Carolyn Randolph-Kato, Champaign, IL
IL	Chicago	3Arts, Chicago, IL (signatory: Esther Grimm)
IL	Chicago	6018North, Chicago, IL (signatory: Tricia Van Eck)
IL	Chicago	Arts & Business Council of Chicago, Chicago, IL (signatory: Kristin Larsen)
IL	Chicago	Arts Alliance Illinois, Chicago, IL (signatory: Claire Rice)
IL	Chicago	Association For Creative Industries, Chicago, IL (signatory: Peter Finn)
IL	Chicago	BLVE, Chicago, IL (signatory: Brian Loevner)
IL	Chicago	Cerqua Rivera Dance Theatre, Chicago, IL (signatory: Catherine Painter)
IL	Chicago	City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, Chicago, IL (signatory: Mark Kelly)
IL	Chicago	Contenidos Artasticos INC, Chicago, IL (signatory: Ana Cristina Vazquez Rangel)
IL	Chicago	Goodman Theatre, Chicago, IL (signatory: Roche Schulfer)
IL	Chicago	HotHouse, Chicago, IL (signatory: Marguerite Horberg)
IL	Chicago	Ingenuity, Inc., Chicago, IL (signatory: Jackie Rodgers)
IL	Chicago	Lookingglass Theatre Company, Chicago, IL (signatory: Rachel Fink)
IL	Chicago	Lyric Opera of Chicago, Chicago, IL (signatory: Patrick Nugent)

IL	Chicago	National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture, Chicago, IL (signatory: Billy Ocasio)
IL	Chicago	Redtwist Theatre, Chicago, IL (signatory: Charlie Marie McGrath)
IL	Chicago	Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, Chicago, IL (signatory: Catherine Painter)
IL	Chicago	The Metal Shop Performance Lab LLC, Chicago, IL (signatory: Alex Mallory)
IL	Chicago	The Pentoga Club, Chicago, IL (signatory: Jenny Davis)
IL	Chicago	Third Coast Percussion, Chicago, IL (signatory: Reba Cafarelli)
IL	Chicago	United States Artists, Chicago, IL (signatory: Deana Haggag)
IL	Chicago	Urban Gateways, Chicago, IL (signatory: Abigail Prescott)
IL	Chicago	Josh Bernaski, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Sarah Burnham, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Tyler Calhoun, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Diane Claussen, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Thom Cox, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Kevin Dwyer, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Anna Glowacki, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Amanda Heuermann, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Vicki Heyman, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Michelle Hodalj, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Melissa Humbert, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Liliana Lewicka, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Mary Livoni, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Matthew Mcmullen, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Michael Pollard, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Sarah Ross, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Arlene Turner-Crawford, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Sally Wippman, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Fran Zell, Chicago, IL
IL	Chicago	Kelsee Avery, Chicago , IL
IL	Deerfield	Maureen Stapleton Hammond, Deerfield, IL
IL	Des Plaines	Verda Beth Martell, Des Plaines, IL
IL	Downers Grove	Elizabeth Cerny, Downers Grove, IL
IL	Downers Grove	Nancy Poch, Downers Grove, IL
IL	Elmhurst	Barbara Aguirre, Elmhurst, IL
IL	Elmhurst	James Aguirre, Elmhurst, IL

IL	Evanston	Valerie Hector Designs, Ltd., Evanston, IL (signatory: Valerie Hector)
IL	Evanston	Jennifer Britton, Evanston, IL
IL	Evanston	Mike Falevits, Evanston, IL
IL	Glen Ellyn	Illinois Presenters Network, Glen Ellyn, IL (signatory: Thomas Hensel)
IL	Grayslake	Lisa Rock Entertainment, Grayslake, IL (signatory: Lisa Rock)
IL	Lansing	Amira Davis, Lansing, IL
IL	Lindenhurst	Tracie Folger, Lindenhurst, IL
IL	Lockport	John Lustig, Lockport, IL
IL	Morton Grove	Andy Simon, Morton Grove, IL
IL	Naperville	Marcus Petrella, Naperville, IL
IL	Northbrook	Karina Llergo, Northbrook, IL
IL	Oak Forest	Yang and Olivia Arts Foundation, Oak Forest, IL (signatory: I-Hsuan Tsai)
IL	Oak Park	Oak Park Area Arts Council, Oak Park, IL (signatory: Camille Wilson White)
IL	South Elgin	Matthew Muneses, South Elgin, IL
IL	Springfield	Springfield Area Arts Council, Springfield, IL (signatory: Sheila Walk)
IL	Urbana	University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL (signatory: Kevin Hamilton)
IL	Urbana	Emily Page, Urbana, IL
IN	Bloomington	Anna Larson, Bloomington, IN
IN	Bloomington	Miah Michaelsen, Bloomington, IN
IN	Dillsboro	Sara Kahmann, Dillsboro, IN
IN	Highland	Susan Eleuterio, Highland, IN
IN	Houston	TORCH, Houston, IN (signatory: Robert Jackson)
IN	Indianapolis	Arts Council of Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN (signatory: Julie Goodman)
IN	Indianapolis	Harrison Center for the Arts, Indianapolis, IN (signatory: Joanna Tadt)
IN	Indianapolis	IndyFringe, Indianapolis, IN (signatory: Pauline Moffat)
IN	Indianapolis	PATTERN, Indianapolis, IN (signatory: Polina Osherov)
IN	Indianapolis	Terry Whitt Bailey, Indianapolis, IN
IN	Long Beach	David Hoppe, Long Beach, IN
IN	Long Beach	Mary Hoppe, Long Beach, IN
IN	Rockville	David Vogel, Rockville, IN
IN	Terre Haute	Mary Kramer, Terre Haute, IN

KS	Baldwin City	Lumberyard Arts Center, Baldwin City, KS (signatory: jeannette blackmar)
KS	Kansas City	Folk Alliance International, Kansas City, KS (signatory: Aengus Finnan)
KS	Overland Park	Arts Council of Johnson County, Overland Park, KS (signatory: Sarah VanLanduyt)
KS	Overland Park	Kristin Raven, Overland Park, KS
KS	Prairie Village	Sarah VanLanduyt, Prairie Village, KS
KS	Washington	Film Festival Alliance, Washington, KS (signatory: Lela Meadow-Conner)
KS	Wichita	Shay Chic Event Productions, Wichita, KS (signatory: Shannon Boone)
KS	Wichita	The Arts Council, Wichita, KS (signatory: Naomi Shapiro)
KS	Wichita	Laura Lombard, Wichita, KS
KS	Wichita	Naomi Shapiro, Wichita, KS
KS	Wichita	Allenworks Art, Wichita , KS (signatory: Collin Allen)
KY	Crestwood	Stephen Matney, Crestwood, KY
KY	Danville	Steve Hoffman, Danville, KY
KY	Edmonton	Barn Lot Theater, Edmonton , KY (signatory: Kyle Hadley)
KY	Eminence	Brooklyn Van Landingham, Eminence , KY
KY	Lexington	LexArts, Lexington, KY (signatory: Maury Sparrow)
KY	Lexington	Mark Shanda, Lexington, KY
KY	Lexington	Katelyn Purnell , Lexington , KY
KY	Louisville	Troy Plumer, Louisville, KY
KY	Lousiville	daniel Perez Lighting Design, Lousiville, KY (signatory: Daniel Perez)
KY	Lousiville	Daniel Perez, Lousiville, KY
KY	Midway	Lori Meadows, Midway, KY
KY	Salvisa	Sarah Elam, Salvisa, KY
KY	Shelbyville	Whitney Christiansen, Shelbyville, KY
KY	Shelbyville	David Glowacki, Shelbyville, KY
KY	Whitesburg	Mimi Pickering, Whitesburg, KY
LA	Baton Rouge	Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge, Baton Rouge, LA (signatory: Leea Russell)
LA	Baton Rouge	Renee Chatelain, Baton Rouge, LA
LA	Baton Rouge	Thien-Kieu Lam, Baton Rouge, LA

LA	Destrehan	The Paz Group, Destrehan, LA (signatory: Michael Paz)
LA	Gretna	Jerry Henderson, Gretna, LA
LA	Hammond	The Columbia Theatre for the Performing Arts, Hammond, LA (signatory: Jim Winter)
LA	Independence	Lynda Katz, Independence, LA
LA	Lafayette	Louisiana Crafts Guild, Lafayette, LA (signatory: Eugene Meneray)
LA	Lafayette	Lynn Langhoff, Lafayette, LA
LA	Metairie	Megan Ihnen, Metairie, LA
LA	New Orleans	A Studio in the Woods, New Orleans, LA (signatory: Camille Hill-Prewitt)
LA	New Orleans	Arts Council New Orleans, New Orleans, LA (signatory: Heidi Schmalbach)
LA	New Orleans	Cocoa & Cream, LLC , New Orleans, LA (signatory: Ethel Williams)
LA	New Orleans	Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, New Orleans, LA (signatory: Scott Harrison)
LA	New Orleans	New Orleans Independent Fashion, New Orleans, LA (signatory: Melissa Clark)
LA	New Orleans	Parish Road Music LLC, New Orleans, LA (signatory: Kelcy Wilburn)
LA	New Orleans	Sound Diplomacy, New Orleans, LA (signatory: Shain Shapiro)
LA	New Orleans	The Ella Project, New Orleans, LA (signatory: Gene Meneray)
LA	New Orleans	The New Orleans Society of Dance, LLC, New Orleans, LA (signatory: Millisia White)
LA	New Orleans	Where Y'Art, New Orleans, LA (signatory: Collin Ferguson)
LA	New Orleans	Ashley Firstley, New Orleans, LA
LA	New Orleans	Leah Foster, New Orleans, LA
LA	New Orleans	Kevin George, New Orleans, LA
LA	New Orleans	Leslie Gunn, New Orleans, LA
LA	New Orleans	Jennifer James, New Orleans, LA
LA	New Orleans	Joan Long, New Orleans, LA
LA	New Orleans	Melanie Morel-Ensminger, New Orleans, LA
LA	New Orleans	Lynn O'Shea, New Orleans, LA
LA	New Orleans	ELLIOTT STOKES, New Orleans, LA
LA	New Orleans	Jessie Thompson, New Orleans, LA
LA	New Orleans	Arts New Orleans , New Orleans , LA (signatory: Lindsay Glatz)
LA	New Orleans	Edward Begnaud , New Orleans , LA

LA	New Orleans	Renee Benson , New Orleans , LA
LA	New Orleans	Anne Cicero , New Orleans , LA
LA	New Orleans	Pamela Reed, New Orleans , LA
MA	Amesbury	Michelle Garcia, Amesbury, MA
MA	Amherst	Pam Korza, Amherst, MA
MA	Amherst	Barbara Schaffer Bacon, Amherst, MA
MA	Arlington	BroadBand Collaborative, Arlington, MA (signatory: Cristin Canterbury Bagnall)
MA	Auburn	Lisa Kramer, Auburn, MA
MA	Becket	Jacob's Pillow, Becket, MA (signatory: Pamela Tatge)
MA	Beverly	Kati Nalbandian, Beverly, MA
MA	Boston	Arts Connect International, Boston, MA (signatory: Marian Brown)
MA	Boston	Arts Consulting Group, Boston, MA (signatory: Amanda Bertone)
MA	Boston	BalletRox, Boston, MA (signatory: Valerie Maio)
MA	Boston	Global Arts Live, Boston, MA (signatory: Susan Weiler)
MA	Boston	MASSCreative, Boston, MA (signatory: Emily Ruddock)
MA	Boston	Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture, City of Boston, Boston, MA (signatory: Kara Elliott-Ortega)
MA	Boston	Society of Arts + Crafts, Boston, MA (signatory: Brigitte Martin)
MA	Boston	StageSource, Boston, MA (signatory: Dawn Simmons)
MA	Boston	the Boston Foundation, Boston, MA (signatory: Brianna Aloisio)
MA	Boston	The Front Porch Arts Collective of Boston, Boston, MA (signatory: Maurice Parent)
MA	Boston	The Record Co., Boston, MA (signatory: Maria Bartolotta)
MA	Boston	Zizi Gallery, Boston, MA (signatory: Dumas Lafontant)
MA	Boston	Dana Brooks, Boston, MA
MA	Boston	Douglas DeNatale, Boston, MA
MA	Boston	Nic Divito, Boston, MA
MA	Boston	Maggie Holtzberg, Boston, MA
MA	Boston	Hadley Johnson, Boston, MA
MA	Boston	Julia Ryan, Boston, MA

MA	Boston	Candelaria Silva-Collins, Boston, MA
MA	Boston	Zachary West, Boston, MA
MA	Boston	Leslie Wu Foley, Boston, MA
MA	Boston	Katie Most, Boston , MA
MA	Brighton	Gabriela Martina, Brighton, MA
MA	Brookline	StoriesLive.org, Brookline, MA (signatory: Norah Dooley)
MA	Cambridge	American Repertory Theater, Cambridge, MA (signatory: Anna Fitzloff)
MA	Cambridge	Central Square Theater, Cambridge, MA (signatory: jane minasian)
MA	Cambridge	Commission on the Arts, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge, MA (signatory: Mary Lyons)
MA	Cambridge	Jean Appolon Expressions, Cambridge, MA (signatory: Daniel Koff)
MA	Cambridge	Underground Railway Railway@Central Square Theater, Cambridge, MA (signatory: Debra Wise)
MA	Cambridge	Jennifer Chang, Cambridge, MA
MA	Cambridge	Cassie Chapados, Cambridge, MA
MA	Cambridge	Brian Corr, Cambridge, MA
MA	Cambridge	Mary Dill, Cambridge, MA
MA	Cambridge	Samantha Fein, Cambridge, MA
MA	Cambridge	Simar Singh, Cambridge, MA
MA	Cambridge	Cambridge Arts Council , Cambridge , MA (signatory: Jason Weeks)
MA	Concord	Radius Ensemble, Concord, MA (signatory: Jennifer Montbach)
MA	Danvers	Sarah Tremblay, Danvers , MA
MA	Dartmouth	Barbara Healy , Dartmouth , MA
MA	East Boston	Erica Charis-Molling, East Boston, MA
MA	Easthampton	The Valley Arts Newsletter, Easthampton, MA (signatory: Bronwen Hodgkinson)
MA	Gardner	Terri Connors-MacMillan, Gardner, MA
MA	Gloucester	Gloucester Stage Company, Gloucester, MA (signatory: Christopher Griffith)
MA	Gloucester	International Music Network, Gloucester, MA (signatory: Jeanna Disney)
MA	Gloucester	Carol Ciulla, Gloucester, MA
MA	Gloucester	karen ristuben, Gloucester, MA
MA	Gloucester	Beth Williams, Gloucester, MA

MA	Grafton	Apple Tree Arts , Grafton, MA (signatory: Alaina Calloway Bolton)
MA	Grafton	Alaina Calloway Bolton, Grafton, MA
MA	Guilford	Sara Coffey, Guilford, MA
MA	Harwich	Paper Plane Consulting, Harwich, MA (signatory: Molly Demeulenaere)
MA	Harwich	RUTH DAVIS, Harwich, MA
MA	Hopedale	David Rowell, Hopedale, MA
MA	Hyannis	Jennifer Stratton , Hyannis, MA
MA	Ipswich	Lux et Umbra Art, Ipswich, MA (signatory: Cynthia August)
MA	Ipswich	Theatre Omnibus, Ipswich, MA (signatory: Richard Mcelvain)
MA	Jamaica Plain	Coolidge Corner Theatre Foundation, Jamaica Plain, MA (signatory: Katherine Tallman)
MA	Jamaica Plain	Paula Elliott, Jamaica Plain, MA
MA	Jamaica Plain	Benji Mauer, Jamaica Plain, MA
MA	Jamaica Plain	Anne Trout, Jamaica Plain, MA
MA	Lebanon	Lebanon Opera House, Lebanon, MA (signatory: Joe Clifford)
MA	Leominster	New England Symphony Orchestra, Leominster, MA (signatory: Edgar Cyrus)
MA	Lowell	Merrimack Repertory Theatre, Lowell, MA (signatory: Bonnie Butkas)
MA	Lynn	Lynn Main Streets, Lynn, MA (signatory: Tia Cole)
MA	Mashpee	O the Fool, Mashpee, MA (signatory: Eric Robbins)
MA	Melrose	Liliane Klein, Melrose, MA
MA	Morristown	Alice Feldman, Morristown, MA
MA	Nantucket	Nantucket Arts Council, Nantucket, MA (signatory: Jill Sandole)
MA	Natick	Richard Maloney, Natick, MA
MA	New Bedford	South Coast Surface Design, New Bedford, MA (signatory: Adrian Burke)
MA	New York	CUE Art Foundation, New York, MA (signatory: Corina Larkin)
MA	North Adams	Ferrin Contemporary, North Adams, MA (signatory: Leslie Ferrin)
MA	North Adams	Francesca Olsen, North Adams, MA
MA	North Dartmouth	Royal Hartigan, North Dartmouth, MA
MA	Northampton	Joanna Rush, Northampton, MA

MA	Old Saybrook	Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center, Old Saybrook, MA (signatory: Brett Elliott)
MA	Orange	Simon Says Booking, Orange, MA (signatory: Phil Simon)
MA	Pittsfield	Sarah Margolis-Pineo, Pittsfield, MA
MA	Reading	Music Works International, Reading, MA (signatory: Alice Feldman)
MA	Richmond	Marian Godfrey, Richmond, MA
MA	Rockport	Rockport Cultural Council, Rockport, MA (signatory: Christine Downing)
MA	Roslindale	Allison Coleman, Roslindale, MA
MA	Salem	City of Salem, Public Art Commission, Salem, MA (signatory: Julie Barry)
MA	Salem	Creative Collective LLC, Salem, MA (signatory: John Andrews)
MA	Salem	Intramersive Media LLC, Salem, MA (signatory: Carly Dwyer)
MA	Somerville	ANIKAYA, Somerville, MA (signatory: Wendy Jehlen)
MA	Somerville	Mudflat Potter School, LLC, Somerville, MA (signatory: Lynn Gervens)
MA	Somerville	Charles G. Baldwin, Somerville, MA
MA	Somerville	Jodi Colella, Somerville, MA
MA	Somerville	Shayna Gleason, Somerville, MA
MA	Somerville	Emily Lilienthal, Somerville, MA
MA	Spencer	Bryan Gordon, Spencer, MA
MA	Sudbury	Cavanaugh Tocci Associates, Inc., Sudbury, MA (signatory: Douglas Bell)
MA	Waltham	Wooden Kiwi Productions LLC, Waltham, MA (signatory: Richard Wood)
MA	Waltham	Jessica Muise, Waltham, MA
MA	Winchester	Richard Osborne, Winchester, MA
MA	Worcester	90.5 WICN, Worcester, MA (signatory: David Ginsburg)
MA	Worcester	City of Worcester, Worcester, MA (signatory: Erin Williams)
MA	Worcester	Southeast Asian Coalition of Massachusetts (63358), Worcester, MA (signatory: Anh Sawyer)
MA	Worcester	WCCA TV, Worcester, MA (signatory: Mauro DePasquale)
MA	Worcester	Worcester Chamber Music Society, Worcester, MA (signatory: Tracy Kraus)

MA	Worcester	Worcester Cultural Coalition, Worcester, MA (signatory: Erin I. Williams)
MA	Worcester	Nikki Erskine, Worcester, MA
MA	Worcester	Yaffa Fain, Worcester, MA
MA	Worcester	Joy Murrieta, Worcester, MA
MA	Worcester	Catherine Wilcox-Titus, Worcester, MA
MD	Annapolis	Fortuned Fame LLC, Annapolis, MD (signatory: Rob Mckinzie)
MD	Annapolis	Lynne Childress, Annapolis, MD
MD	Augusta	ArtsEngageME, Augusta, MD (signatory: Julie Richard)
MD	Austin	City of Austin Cultural Arts Division, Austin, MD (signatory: Meghan Wells)
MD	Austin	City of Austin Music and Entertainment Division, Austin, MD (signatory: Meghan Wells)
MD	Austin	Meghan Wells, Austin, MD
MD	Baltimore	Arts Every Day, Baltimore, MD (signatory: Julia Di Bussolo)
MD	Baltimore	Creative Alliance, Baltimore, MD (signatory: Josh Kohn)
MD	Baltimore	Graham Projects, Baltimore, MD (signatory: Graham Coreil-Allen)
MD	Baltimore	Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, Baltimore, MD (signatory: Theresa Colvin)
MD	Baltimore	Young Audiences of Maryland, Baltimore, MD (signatory: Hana Morford)
MD	Baltimore	Robyn Busch, Baltimore, MD
MD	Baltimore	lindsey clark, Baltimore, MD
MD	Baltimore	Kate Collins, Baltimore, MD
MD	Baltimore	Nora Dennehy, Baltimore, MD
MD	Baltimore	Lisa Fritsch, Baltimore, MD
MD	Baltimore	Robert Jacobson, Baltimore, MD
MD	Baltimore	Deborah "Spice" Kleinmann, Baltimore, MD
MD	Baltimore	J Little, Baltimore, MD
MD	Baltimore	Katherine Lyons, Baltimore, MD
MD	Baltimore	Lydia Munz, Baltimore, MD
MD	Baltimore	Rebecca Myers, Baltimore, MD
MD	Baltimore	Jon Patton, Baltimore, MD
MD	Baltimore	Elias Schutzman, Baltimore, MD
MD	Baltimore	Giovanna Selvaggio, Baltimore, MD
MD	Baltimore	Jessica Solomon, Baltimore, MD

MD	Bethesda	ALIA Prod, Bethesda, MD (signatory: Alison Loerke)
MD	Boyds	Dana Pauley, Boyds, MD
MD	Brentwood	Dance Box Theater, Brentwood, MD (signatory: Laura Schandelmeier)
MD	Brentwood	Amy Mills, Brentwood, MD
MD	Brentwood	Melissa RICHARDSON, Brentwood, MD
MD	Brentwood	Laura Schandelmeier, Brentwood, MD
MD	Brookeville	Tara Holl, Brookeville, MD
MD	Capitol Heights	Paige Hernandez, Capitol Heights, MD
MD	Chevy Chase	Montserrat Gorina-Ysern, LLC, Chevy Chase, MD (signatory: Montserrat Gorina-Ysern, PhD)
MD	College Park	The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, Univ of MD, College Park, MD (signatory: Erica Bondarev Rapach)
MD	Damascus	Carien Quiroga, Damascus, MD
MD	Damascus	Cyndi Gregory, Damascus , MD
MD	Dover	Delaware Arts Alliance, Dover, MD (signatory: Jessica Ball)
MD	Ellicott City	CMI Entertainment, Inc, Ellicott City, MD (signatory: Sean Casey)
MD	Emmitsburg	Slim Harrison, Emmitsburg, MD
MD	Fort Washington	Roslyn Ward, Fort Washington, MD
MD	Frederick	Roser Caminals-Heath, Frederick, MD
MD	Frederick	Sue Trainor, Frederick, MD
MD	Gaithersburg	Best Medicine Rep, Gaithersburg, MD (signatory: John Morogiello)
MD	Gaithersburg	Ermyn King, Gaithersburg, MD
MD	Hyattsville	Jonathan Wentworth Associates, Ltd., Hyattsville, MD (signatory: Martha Woods)
MD	Hyattsville	Teaching Artists of the Mid-Atlantic, Hyattsville, MD (signatory: Jennifer Ridgway)
MD	Hyattsville	JENNIFER RIDGWAY, Hyattsville, MD
MD	Kensington	Tiffanie Horner, Kensington, MD
MD	Landover	SOLE Defined, Landover, MD (signatory: Quynn Johnson)
MD	Landover	Quynn Johnson, Landover, MD
MD	Lanham	Creative and Equal Opportunities Inc., Lanham, MD (signatory: Kayla Harley)
MD	Laurel	Matthew Pauli, Laurel, MD
MD	Lutherville	Leap Day Media, Lutherville, MD (signatory: Kristen Cooper)

MD	Montgomery Village	Khaleshia Thorpe-Price, Montgomery Village, MD
MD	Mount Airy	LaVerne Miers-Bond, Mount Airy, MD
MD	Mount Rainier	Jacob Howley, Mount Rainier, MD
MD	Ocean Pines	Sandra Michael, Ocean Pines, MD
MD	Olney	Olney Theatre Center for the Artss, Olney, MD (signatory: Debbie Ellinghaus)
MD	Owings Mills	The Gordon Center for Performing Arts, Owings Mills, MD (signatory: Sara Shalva)
MD	Oxon Hill	Morgan Hall, Oxon Hill, MD
MD	Riverdale Park	Association of Writers & Writing Programs, Riverdale Park, MD (signatory: Cynthia Sherman)
MD	Rockvile	Norman Rogers, Rockvile, MD
MD	Rockville	Arts for the Aging, Inc., Rockville, MD (signatory: Janine Tursini)
MD	Rockville	Emma Jaster, Rockville, MD
MD	Rockvillle	Liliane Blom Art Studio, Rockvillle, MD (signatory: LILIANE BLOM)
MD	Rosedale	Valerie Branch, Rosedale, MD
MD	Silver Spring	Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, Silver Spring, MD (signatory: Suzan Jenkins)
MD	Silver Spring	Arts on the Block, Silver Spring, MD (signatory: Anne L'Ecuyer)
MD	Silver Spring	Carpe Diem Arts, Inc., Silver Spring, MD (signatory: Busy Graham)
MD	Silver Spring	Future of Music Coalition, Silver Spring, MD (signatory: Kevin Erickson)
MD	Silver Spring	Justice Arts Coalition , Silver Spring, MD (signatory: Wendy Jason)
MD	Silver Spring	Lenore Blank Kelner and Company, Silver Spring, MD (signatory: Lenore Kelner)
MD	Silver Spring	National Council for the Traditional Arts, Silver Spring, MD (signatory: Lora Bottinelli)
MD	Silver Spring	National Dance Education Organization, Silver Spring, MD (signatory: Susan Mcgreevy-Nichols)
MD	Silver Spring	Mary Gresock, Silver Spring, MD
MD	Silver Spring	Elaine Robnett Moore, Silver Spring, MD
MD	Silver Spring	Gwydion Suilebhan, Silver Spring, MD
MD	Silver Spring	Michael Walker, Silver Spring, MD
MD	Silver Spring	Marcie Wolf-Hubbard, Silver Spring, MD
MD	Silver Spring	Christion Ty Edwards, Silver Spring , MD

MD	Takoma Park	Brass Ring Company, Takoma Park, MD (signatory: Denise Jones)
MD	Takoma Park	Kathryn Aboudou, Takoma Park, MD
MD	Takoma Park	Christine Alexander, Takoma Park, MD
MD	Takoma Park	Cate Bonacini, Takoma Park, MD
MD	Takoma Park	Deborah Grossman, Takoma Park, MD
MD	Takoma Park	Abigail Hobart, Takoma Park, MD
MD	Takoma Park	Brooks Long, Takoma Park, MD
MD	Takoma Park	Ryan McAllister, Takoma Park, MD
MD	Takoma Park	Ashley Pollard, Takoma Park, MD
MD	Takoma Park	margaret walker, Takoma Park, MD
MD	Takoma Park	Candace Wolf, Takoma Park, MD
MD	Upper Marlboro	Ayesis Clay, Upper Marlboro, MD
MD	Windsor Mill	National Association of Black Storytellers, Windsor Mill, MD (signatory: Janice Greene)
MD	Windsor Mill	Janice Greene, Windsor Mill, MD
MD	Woodbine	Katherine Dilworth, Woodbine, MD
ME	Augusta	Ryan Leighton, Augusta , ME
ME	Bangor	Penobscot Theatre Company, Bangor, ME (signatory: Bari Newport)
ME	Bar Harbor	Danielle Rose Byrd, Bar Harbor, ME
ME	Belfast	Waterfall Arts, Belfast, ME (signatory: Kim Fleming)
ME	Biddeford Pool	Roseann McAllister, Biddeford Pool, ME
ME	Boothbay Harbor	The Opera House, Boothbay Harbor, ME (signatory: Cathy Sherrill)
ME	Elkton	Kalmia Hill Arts, Elkton, ME (signatory: Stacy Doney)
ME	Falmouth	Charlie Swerdlow, Falmouth, ME
ME	Orono	Mary Jean Sedlock, Orono, ME
ME	Portland	Portland Chamber Music Festival, Portland, ME (signatory: Alice Kornhauser)
ME	Portland	SPACE, Portland, ME (signatory: Kelsey Johnson)
ME	Winthrop	John Davis, Winthrop, ME
MI	Allen Park	Angela Palmerio, Allen Park, MI
MI	Ann Arbor	a2ru (Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities), Ann Arbor, MI (signatory: Shannon Moen)
MI	Ann Arbor	Ann Arbor Film Festival, Ann Arbor, MI (signatory: Leslie Raymond)

MI	Ann Arbor	ARTRAIN, INC., Ann Arbor, MI (signatory: Deb Polich)
MI	Ann Arbor	Great Lakes Performing Artist Associates, Ann Arbor, MI (signatory: Aileen Rohwer)
MI	Ann Arbor	Mike Green & Associates, Ann Arbor, MI (signatory: Mike Green)
MI	Ann Arbor	rootoftwo, LLC, Ann Arbor, MI (signatory: Cezanne Charles)
MI	Ann Arbor	The Arts Alliance, Ann Arbor, MI (signatory: Deb Polich)
MI	Ann Arbor	University Musical Society, Ann Arbor, MI (signatory: Sara Billmann)
MI	Ann Arbor	Deb Polich, Ann Arbor, MI
MI	Charlotte	Amy Parish, Charlotte, MI
MI	Chicago	Robert Dolehide, Chicago, MI
MI	Comstock	Jennifer Wood, Comstock, MI
MI	Detroit	Midtown Detroit, Inc., Detroit, MI (signatory: Annmarie Borucki)
MI	Detroit	Clay Gary II, Detroit, MI
MI	Detroit	Jeremy Peters, Detroit, MI
MI	Detroit	Wendy Thompson, Detroit, MI
MI	East Lansing	Marcus Fields, East Lansing, MI
MI	Farmington	Hallie Bard, Farmington, MI
MI	Farmington Hills	Cornelia Kelley, Farmington Hills, MI
MI	Flint	Shelley Spivack, Flint, MI
MI	Grosse Pointe Park	Diana Miller, Grosse Pointe Park, MI
MI	Howell	Debbie Mikula, Howell, MI
MI	Kalamazoo	Plasko Design, Kalamazoo, MI (signatory: Patricia Plasko)
MI	Kalamazoo	Paige Daniels, Kalamazoo, MI
MI	Kalamazoo	Dawn DeLuca, Kalamazoo, MI
MI	Kalamazoo	Meghan Feeman, Kalamazoo, MI
MI	Kalamazoo	Erin Golcu, Kalamazoo, MI
MI	Kalamazoo	Sarah Mansberger, Kalamazoo, MI
MI	Lansing	Cultural Advocacy Network of Michigan, Lansing, MI (signatory: Deborah E. Mikula)
MI	Lansing	Lansing Art Gallery & Education Center, Lansing, MI (signatory: Michelle Carlson)
MI	Lansing	Matthew Donaldson, Lansing, MI
MI	Lansing	Kelly Stuible-Clark, Lansing, MI
MI	Lansing	David Wolski, Lansing, MI
MI	Mackinac Island	Marsha Orr, Mackinac Island, MI
MI	Madison Heights	Anna Janik-Shaw, Madison Heights, MI

MI	Manchester	Riverfolk Music and Arts Org, Manchester, MI (signatory: Aileen Rohwer)
MI	MI	Design Core Detroit, MI, MI (signatory: Olga Stella)
MI	Midland	Midland Center for the Arts, Midland, MI (signatory: Dave Jao)
MI	Milan	Rapport.tw, LLC, Milan, MI (signatory: Tina Walther)
MI	New York	Dance Theatre of Harlem, New York, MI (signatory: Anna Glass)
MI	New York	HB Studio (Herbert Berghof Studio, Inc.), New York, MI (signatory: Edith Meeks)
MI	Paw Paw	John Wagner, Paw Paw, MI
MI	Portage	Kalamazoo RESA - Education for the Arts , Portage, MI (signatory: Bryan Zocher)
MI	Portage	Mandi Smith, Portage, MI
MI	Portage	Angela Telfer, Portage, MI
MI	Redford	Christina Smith, Redford, MI
MI	Saint Clair Shores	Jean Bails, Saint Clair Shores, MI
MI	Traverse City	Mary Gillett, Traverse City, MI
MI	Washington	Beth Dusevic, Washington, MI
MN	Anoka	Robinson Scott Glass Studio, Anoka, MN (signatory: Robinson Scott)
MN	Apple Valley	Derek Rucker, Apple Valley, MN
MN	Bemidji	Mary Therese, Bemidji, MN
MN	Center City	Sarah Ratermann Beahan, Center City, MN
MN	Duluth	Martin DeWitt, Duluth, MN
MN	Eden Prairie	David Pekach, Eden Prairie , MN
MN	Edina	Jane Cashin, Edina, MN
MN	Forest Lake	Sheila Smith, Forest Lake, MN
MN	Golden Valley	Patricia Layton, Golden Valley, MN
MN	Lakeville	Kelly Anderson, Lakeville, MN
MN	Lanesboro	Lanesboro Arts, Lanesboro, MN (signatory: Robbie Brokken)
MN	Little Falls	Great River Arts, Little Falls, MN (signatory: Michelle Kiley)
MN	Minneapolis	American Craft Council, Minneapolis, MN (signatory: Sarah Schultz)
MN	Minneapolis	Articulture, Minneapolis, MN (signatory: Elizabeth Greenbaum)
MN	Minneapolis	Arts Midwest, Minneapolis, MN (signatory: Anne Romens)

MN	Minneapolis	Asian Media Access, Inc., Minneapolis, MN (signatory: Ange Hwang)
MN	Minneapolis	Copla, Minneapolis, MN (signatory: Amelia Nielsen)
MN	Minneapolis	Hortensia PLLC, Minneapolis, MN (signatory: Miluska Novota)
MN	Minneapolis	Maven Cre, Minneapolis, MN (signatory: Mike Finkelstein)
MN	Minneapolis	Minnesota Fringe Festival, Minneapolis, MN (signatory: Dawn Bentley)
MN	Minneapolis	Uptown Art Fair | Uptown Association, Minneapolis, MN (signatory: Jill Osiecki)
MN	Minneapolis	Z Puppets Rosenschnoz, Minneapolis, MN (signatory: Chris Griffith)
MN	Minneapolis	Marion Angelica, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Brenna Busse, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Vanessa DeLaire, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Rita Dungey, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Becky Franklin, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Chris Gustafson, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Nicole Houff, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Gulgun Kayim, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Chris Madsen, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Jeanine Malec, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Layl Mcdill, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Ellen Mueller, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Lindsay Noble, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Kari Schloner, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Deb Sherrer, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Erik Takeshita, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Laura Wennstrom, Minneapolis, MN
MN	Minneapolis	Magnetic Originals, Minneapolis , MN (signatory: Jeffery Gauss)
MN	Minneapolis	Jill Birckelbaw, Minneapolis , MN
MN	Minneapolis	Kate Vinson, Minneapolis , MN
MN	Mount Carroll	Charlotte Behrens, Mount Carroll, MN
MN	Plymouth	Linda Clayton-Behr, Plymouth, MN
MN	Prior Lake	Alejandra Pelinka, Prior Lake, MN
MN	Roseville	Arts Roseville, Roseville, MN (signatory: Ross Willits)
MN	Saint Paul	American Composers Forum, Saint Paul, MN (signatory: Vanessa Rose)

MN	Saint Paul	FilmNorth, Saint Paul, MN (signatory: Reilly Tillman)
MN	Saint Paul	Forecast Public Art, Saint Paul, MN (signatory: Theresa Sweetland)
MN	Saint Paul	LISC Twin Cities, Saint Paul, MN (signatory: Jamie Schumacher)
MN	Saint Paul	Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, Saint Paul, MN (signatory: Kathy Mouacheupao)
MN	Saint Paul	Minnesota Music Coalition, Saint Paul, MN (signatory: Joanna Schnedler)
MN	Saint Paul	Springboard for the Arts, Saint Paul, MN (signatory: Laura Zabel)
MN	Saint Paul	Adam Erickson, Saint Paul, MN
MN	Saint Paul	Alex Hagen, Saint Paul, MN
MN	Saint Paul	Kathy Mouacheupao, Saint Paul, MN
MN	Saint Paul	Khin Oo, Saint Paul, MN
MN	St Paul	The Milligan Studio, St Paul, MN (signatory: Nicole Mary Milligan)
MN	St. Paul	Sarah Wiechmann, St. Paul, MN
MN	St. Peter	Terena Wilkens, St. Peter, MN
MN	Stillwater	Barbara Koppang, Stillwater, MN
MO	Columbia	Missouri Folk Arts Program, Columbia, MO (signatory: Lisa Higgins)
MO	Columbia	Museum of Art and Archaeology, Columbia, MO (signatory: Alex Barker)
MO	Columbia	Alex Barker, Columbia, MO
MO	Columbia	Lisa Higgins, Columbia, MO
MO	Des Peres	NAPAMA, Des Peres, MO (signatory: Crandall Rogers)
MO	Hermann	Ace of Spades Agrden Art/Copper Curls Sculpture, Hermann, MO (signatory: Alice Calhoun)
MO	Kansas City	ArtsKC - Regional Arts Council, Kansas City, MO (signatory: Branden Haralson)
MO	Kansas City	Heartland Song Network, Kansas City, MO (signatory: Danny Powell)
MO	Kansas City	Kansas City Ballet Association, Kansas City, MO (signatory: Jeffrey Bentley)
MO	Kansas City	Musica Vocale, Inc., Kansas City, MO (signatory: Melissa Carter)
MO	Kansas City	reVoice, Kansas City, MO (signatory: Riva Capellari)

MO	Kansas City	Margaret Keough, Kansas City, MO
MO	Kansas City	Susan Mahlstedt, Kansas City, MO
MO	Kansas City	Deborah Sandler, Kansas City, MO
MO	Liberty	Melissa Carter, Liberty, MO
MO	Maryland Heights	Missouri Alliance for Arts Education, Maryland Heights, MO (signatory: Phyllis Pasley)
MO	Maryland Heights	Phyllis Pasley, Maryland Heights, MO
MO	Oak Ridge	Melissa Whitaker, Oak Ridge, MO
MO	Plattsburg	Laurel DeFreece Artist/Designer, Plattsburg, MO (signatory: Laurel Defreece)
MO	St. Joseph	Teresa Fankhauser, St. Joseph, MO
MO	St. Louis	Four Mortals Productions, Inc., St. Louis, MO (signatory: Crandall Rogers)
MO	St. Louis	Megan Cahill, St. Louis, MO
MO	St. Louis	Bailey Elizabeth Rogers, St. Louis, MO
MO	St. Louis	Arts and Education Council of Greater St. Louis, St. Louis , MO (signatory: Cynthia Prost)
MS	Meridian	Sabrina Miller, Meridian, MS
MS	Oxford	Mississippi Presenters Network, Oxford, MS (signatory: Wayne Andrews)
MS	West Point	Sabrina Campbell, West Point, MS
MT	Helena	Daniel Morton, Helena, MT
MT	Los Angeles	Emma Lewis Thomas, Los Angeles, MT
NC	Apex	Melissa Griffin, Apex, NC
NC	Asheville	A Telling Experience, Asheville, NC (signatory: David Novak)
NC	Asheville	Asheville Area Arts Council, Asheville, NC (signatory: Katie Cornell)
NC	Asheville	Center for Craft, Asheville, NC (signatory: Stephanie Moore)
NC	Asheville	LEAF Global Arts, Asheville, NC (signatory: Jennifer Pickering)
NC	Asheville	Montford Park Players, Asheville, NC (signatory: John Russell)
NC	Asheville	Wortham Center for the Performing Arts, Asheville, NC (signatory: Rae Geoffrey)
NC	Asheville	Kim Masnick, Asheville, NC
NC	Asheville	Jared Mcentire, Asheville, NC
NC	Asheville	Jennifer Murphy, Asheville, NC
NC	Asheville	Sylvia J Pierce, Asheville, NC

NC	Asheville	Nathaniel Wyrick, Asheville, NC
NC	Asheville	Marilyn Zapf, Asheville, NC
NC	Asheville	Craft Your Commerce, Asheville , NC (signatory: Gwynne Rukenbrod Smith)
NC	Asheville	Mary Farmer Fine Art, Asheville , NC (signatory: Mary Farmer)
NC	Boone	Appalachian Theatre of the High Country, Boone, NC (signatory: Keith Martin)
NC	Boone	Martha Marking, Boone, NC
NC	Boone	Keith Martin, Boone, NC
NC	Boone	Paulette Marty, Boone, NC
NC	Boone	Frank Mohler, Boone, NC
NC	Brooklyn	Keegansmission Creative, Brooklyn, NC (signatory: Alisa Keegan)
NC	Burlington	Eric Hart, Burlington , NC
NC	Cameron	Danica Fortenberry, Cameron, NC
NC	Candler	Barry Silverstein, Candler, NC
NC	Carrboro	Elizabeth Valsing, Carrboro, NC
NC	Cary	North Carolina Presenters Consortium, Cary, NC (signatory: Susan Heiserman)
NC	Cary	Joanie Conwell, Cary, NC
NC	Chapel Hill	TAB Arts Center Non Profit, Chapel Hill, NC (signatory: Sunny Gravely Foushee)
NC	Chapel Hill	Adam Maxfield, Chapel Hill, NC
NC	Charlotte	Actor's Theatre of Charlotte, Charlotte, NC (signatory: Charles Decker)
NC	Charlotte	Caroline Calouche & Co. / Charlotte Cirque and Dance Center, Charlotte, NC (signatory: Caroline Calouche)
NC	Charlotte	Charlotte Is Creative, Charlotte, NC (signatory: Matt Olin)
NC	Charlotte	Hue House, Charlotte, NC (signatory: David 'Dae-Lee' Arrington)
NC	Charlotte	Aly Amidei, Charlotte, NC
NC	Charlotte	Liz Fitzgerald, Charlotte, NC
NC	Charlotte	Norma Munn, Charlotte, NC
NC	Charlotte	Meg Whalen, Charlotte, NC
NC	Clayton	Catherine Marraccini, Clayton, NC
NC	Davidson	Doris Kapner, Davidson, NC
NC	Durham	Durham Arts Council, Durham, NC (signatory: Sherry DeVries)
NC	Durham	Noel James, Durham, NC

NC	Durham	Mother Nature Mosaics, Durham , NC (signatory: Jeannette Brossart)
NC	Fairview	Karen Wallace-Meigs, Fairview, NC
NC	Fletcher	Nanette Asbury, Fletcher, NC
NC	Greensboro	ArtsGreensboro, Greensboro, NC (signatory: Laura Way)
NC	Greensboro	North Carolina Theatre Conference, Greensboro, NC (signatory: Angela Hays)
NC	Greensboro	Southeastern Theatre Conference, Greensboro, NC (signatory: Chris Bailey)
NC	Greensboro	Rebecca Marlans, Greensboro, NC
NC	Hendersonville	Burn Studio, Hendersonville, NC (signatory: Ron Adolph)
NC	Highlands	ML Performing Arts Center, Highlands, NC (signatory: Mary Adair Trumbly)
NC	Hillsborough	Orange County Arts Commission, Hillsborough, NC (signatory: Katie Murray)
NC	Jacksonville	Florida Theatre, Jacksonville, NC (signatory: Numa Saisselin)
NC	Kill Devil Hills	Lola Davis-Jones, Kill Devil Hills, NC
NC	Lexington	Kentuckians for the Arts, Lexington, NC (signatory: Philip Shepherd)
NC	Lincolnton	Lincoln Cultural Development Center, Inc., Lincolnton, NC (signatory: Cathy Davis)
NC	Pittsboro	Linda Collura, Pittsboro, NC
NC	Pittsboro	Gilda McDaniel, Pittsboro, NC
NC	Raleigh	Arts North Carolina, Raleigh, NC (signatory: Nate Mcgaha)
NC	Raleigh	Metamorphosis Metals, Raleigh, NC (signatory: Sonya Coulson Rook)
NC	Raleigh	Slee Arnold & Company, Raleigh, NC (signatory: Slee Arnold)
NC	Raleigh	United Arts Council of Raleigh & Wake County, Raleigh, NC (signatory: Charles Phaneuf)
NC	Raleigh	kayla Garcia, Raleigh, NC
NC	Raleigh	Kristin Gibson, Raleigh, NC
NC	Raleigh	Patricia Hall, Raleigh, NC
NC	Raleigh	Jo Hart, Raleigh, NC
NC	Raleigh	Jamie Katz Court, Raleigh, NC
NC	Raleigh	Thomas Nevels, Raleigh, NC
NC	Raleigh	Ardath Weaver, Raleigh, NC
NC	Raleigh	Courtney Wheeler, Raleigh, NC
NC	Salisbury	Erin Dougherty, Salisbury, NC

NC	Sanford	Heart of Carolina Jazz Society and Orchestra , Sanford, NC (signatory: Gregg Gelb)
NC	Sanford	Temple theatre Company, Inc., Sanford, NC (signatory: Peggy Taphorn)
NC	Statesville	Performing Arts Live of Iredell, Statesville, NC (signatory: Bill Warren)
NC	Waxhaw	Karla Shields, Waxhaw, NC
NC	Whittier	Terrapin Studio, Whittier, NC (signatory: Tom Mcmillan)
NC	Wilmington	DREAMS Center for Arts Education, Wilmington, NC (signatory: Kevin Blackburn)
NC	Wilmington	University of North Carolina Wilmington's Office of the Arts, Wilmington, NC (signatory: Fidias Reyes)
NC	Winston-Salem	Muse Scenic Studio, Winston-Salem, NC (signatory: Jennifer O'Kelly)
NC	Winston-Salem	Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, Winston-Salem, NC (signatory: William Carpenter)
NC	Winston-Salem	Sarah Kelly, Winston-Salem, NC
NC	Winston-Salem	Joseph Logan, Winston-Salem, NC
ND	Bismarck	North Dakota Council on the Arts, Bismarck, ND (signatory: Kim Konikow)
NE	Omaha	Great Plains Black History Museum, Omaha, NE (signatory: Eric Ewing)
NE	Omaha	Nebraskans for the Arts, Omaha, NE (signatory: Doug Zbylut)
NE	Omaha	Omaha Community Playhouse, Omaha, NE (signatory: Allyson Wagner)
NE	Omaha	Opera Omaha, Omaha, NE (signatory: Shannon Walenta)
NE	Omaha	The Union for Contemporary Art , Omaha, NE (signatory: Brigitte McQueen)
NE	Omaha	Jacob Rump, Omaha, NE
NE	Omaha	Mikki Schantell, Omaha, NE
NE	Omaha	Shannon Walenta, Omaha, NE
NH	Bethehem	Friends of The Colonial, Bethehem, NH (signatory: Stephen Dignazio)
NH	Canterbury	Keisha Sheedy, Canterbury , NH

NH	Concord	New Hampshire Furniture Masters, Concord, NH (signatory: Mary Mclaughlin)
NH	Concord	NH Citizens for the Arts dba Arts4NH, Concord, NH (signatory: Mary Mclaughlin)
NH	Concord	Roger Brooks, Concord, NH
NH	Guilford	Nancy Detra, Guilford, NH
NH	Keene	Arts Alive!, Keene, NH (signatory: Jessica Gelter)
NH	Lebanon	Opera North, Lebanon, NH (signatory: Maria Laskaris)
NH	Lebanon	Upper Valley Music Center, Lebanon, NH (signatory: Erin Smith)
NH	Lebanon	Paulette Werger, Lebanon, NH
NJ	Aberdeen	Unlimited Myles, Aberdeen, NJ (signatory: Myles Weinstein)
NJ	Basking Ridge	Lisa Gunn-Becker, Basking Ridge, NJ
NJ	Belleville	Cat Plazas, Belleville , NJ
NJ	Brick	Beah Entertainment LLC, Brick, NJ (signatory: Beatrice Foley)
NJ	Brick	The ARTSHOUSE/The Arts Do The Public Good, Brick, NJ (signatory: Lois Saperstein)
NJ	Burlington	ArtPride New Jersey, Burlington, NJ (signatory: Ann Marie Miller)
NJ	East Orange	Barbara Heisler, East Orange, NJ
NJ	Elizabeth	Susan Coen, Elizabeth, NJ
NJ	Elmer	Appel Farm Arts & Music Campus, Elmer, NJ (signatory: Cori Solomon)
NJ	Elmer	Samantha Miller, Elmer, NJ
NJ	Elmer	Heather Yelle, Elmer, NJ
NJ	Englewood	Arts Horizons, Englewood, NJ (signatory: Dena Isles)
NJ	Englishtown	ERIC SHANDROFF, Englishtown, NJ
NJ	Glen Ridge	Mosaic Dance Theater Company, Glen Ridge, NJ (signatory: Morgiana Celeste Varricchio)
NJ	Haddonfield	Anatolia Art & Craft Studio, Haddonfield, NJ (signatory: Ylvia Asal)
NJ	Haddonfield	Ylvia Asal, Haddonfield, NJ
NJ	Hammonton	South Jersey Cultural Alliance, Hammonton, NJ (signatory: Karen Pinzolo)
NJ	Hillsdale	Lexis Horvath, Hillsdale, NJ
NJ	Hopewell	Hopewell Theater, Hopewell, NJ (signatory: Sara Scully)

NJ	Jersey City	Art House Productions, Jersey City, NJ (signatory: Meredith Burns)
NJ	Jersey City	Adrienne Baker, Jersey City, NJ
NJ	Jersey City	John Janas, Jersey City, NJ
NJ	Jersey City	Mallory King, Jersey City, NJ
NJ	Jersey City	Madhuri Shekar, Jersey City, NJ
NJ	Lawnside	2NspireU, LLC, Lawnside, NJ (signatory: Mary Cross)
NJ	Lawrenceville	Diane Guvenis, Lawrenceville, NJ
NJ	Long Island City	Guidarelli & Wills LLC, Long Island City, NJ (signatory: Amber L. Spradlin)
NJ	Lyndhurst	Andrew Nemr, Lyndhurst, NJ
NJ	Madison	Museum of Early Trades & Crafts, Madison, NJ (signatory: Deborah Farrar Starker)
NJ	Maplewood	Jessica Silver, Maplewood, NJ
NJ	Montclair	The National Consortium for Creative Placemaking, Montclair, NJ (signatory: Andrea Orlando)
NJ	Moorestown	Perkins Center for the Arts, Moorestown, NJ (signatory: Kahra Buss)
NJ	Morganville	Lara Atry, Morganville, NJ
NJ	Morristown	Lynn Siebert, Morristown, NJ
NJ	Mt Laurel	Kathleen Casper, Mt Laurel, NJ
NJ	Mt Laurel	Kathleen Casper, Mt Laurel, NJ
NJ	Mullica Hill	Gail Scuderi, Mullica Hill, NJ
NJ	New York	GOH Productions, New York, NJ (signatory: Bonnie Stein)
NJ	Newark	Colbert Artists Management, Inc., Newark, NJ (signatory: Lee Prinz)
NJ	Newark	GlassRoots, Newark, NJ (signatory: Barbara Heisler)
NJ	Newark	Newark Arts, Newark, NJ (signatory: Jeremy Johnson)
NJ	Newark	Jackie Jones, Newark, NJ
NJ	Newark	Emilia LaPenta, Newark, NJ
NJ	Newark	Susan Schear, Newark, NJ
NJ	Nutley	Danielle Camann, Nutley, NJ
NJ	Nyc	The ArtsConnection, Inc., Nyc, NJ (signatory: Steven Tennen)
NJ	Oaklyn	Jennie Quinn, Oaklyn, NJ
NJ	Princeton	Young Audiences Arts for Learning NJ & Eastern PA, Princeton, NJ (signatory: Michele Russo)

NJ	Princeton Junction	West Windsor Arts Council, Princeton Junction, NJ (signatory: Aylin Green)
NJ	Somerdale	Kathy O'Leary, Somerdale, NJ
NJ	South Orange	Amie Herman, South Orange, NJ
NJ	Spotswood	DESIGN-ED, Spotswood, NJ (signatory: Joseph Schwartz)
NJ	Spotswood	JOY JOHNSON, Spotswood, NJ
NJ	Union City	Sara Billeaux, Union City, NJ
NJ	Vauxhall	Winceyco , Vauxhall , NJ (signatory: Wincey Terry)
NJ	West Harrison	Rabbit Hole Theatricks, Inc., West Harrison, NJ (signatory: Adelmo Guidarelli)
NJ	West Long Branch	Vaune Peck, West Long Branch, NJ
NJ	West Orange	Ty Stephens, West Orange, NJ
NM	Albuquerque	New Mexico First, Albuquerque, NM (signatory: Sharon Berman)
NM	Albuquerque	joni palmer, Albuquerque, NM
NM	Albuquerque	Rebecca Smith, Albuquerque, NM
NM	Albuquerque	Barbara Wisoff, Albuquerque, NM
NM	Cincinnati	The Well, Cincinnati, NM (signatory: Stacy Sims)
NM	Ranchos de Taos	Showdown Productions, Ranchos de Taos, NM (signatory: Theresa Klebert)
NM	Roswell	Laurie Rufe, Roswell, NM
NM	Santa Fe	Creative New Mexico, Santa Fe, NM (signatory: Jim Patterson)
NM	Santa Fe	Performance Santa Fe, Santa Fe, NM (signatory: Chad Hilligus)
NM	Santa Fe	Pauline Kanako Kamiyama, Santa Fe, NM
NM	Santa Fe	Corey Mansfield, Santa Fe, NM
NM	Santa Fe	Christina Miller, Santa Fe, NM
NM	Silver City	Silver City Museum, Silver City, NM (signatory: Bart Roselli)
NM	Silver City	Bart Roselli, Silver City, NM
NV	Henderson	Angela Brommel, Henderson, NV
NV	Henderson	Markus Tracy, Henderson , NV
NV	Las Vegas	D'Arte Designs, Las Vegas, NV (signatory: Denise R Duarte)
NV	Las Vegas	Eat More Art Vegas, Las Vegas, NV (signatory: Sarah O'Connell)
NV	Las Vegas	Eat More Art Vegas, Las Vegas, NV (signatory: Sarah O'Connell Debruyn)

NV	Las Vegas	Producers Alliance of Southern Nevada, Las Vegas, NV (signatory: Sarah O'Connell)
NV	Las Vegas	Montana Black, Las Vegas, NV
NV	Las Vegas	DIANE BUSH, Las Vegas, NV
NV	Las Vegas	Denise R. Duarte, Las Vegas, NV
NV	Las Vegas	Alice Hamblen, Las Vegas, NV
NV	Las Vegas	Rebecca Hanley, Las Vegas, NV
NV	Las Vegas	Kendall Hardin, Las Vegas, NV
NV	Las Vegas	Taelor Kahrs, Las Vegas, NV
NV	Las Vegas	Ralph Stalter, Las Vegas, NV
NV	Las Vegas	Desert Arts Action Coalition , Las Vegas , NV (signatory: Wendy Kveck)
NV	Reno	Artown, Reno, NV (signatory: Beth Macmillan)
NV	Reno	Note-Able Music Therapy Services, Reno, NV (signatory: Manal Toppozada)
NV	Reno	Christina Barr, Reno, NV
NV	Reno	Susan Boskoff, Reno, NV
NV	Reno	Beth Macmillan, Reno, NV
NY	Albany	Capital Repertory Theatre, Albany, NY (signatory: Maggie Cahill)
NY	Altamont	Andi Lyons, Altamont, NY
NY	Ankeny	Iowa Cultural Coalition, Ankeny, NY (signatory: Trish Bergren)
NY	Astoria	IndieSpace, Astoria, NY (signatory: Randi Berry)
NY	Astoria	Messenger Theatre Company, Astoria, NY (signatory: Emily Davis)
NY	Astoria	The Indie Theater Fund, Astoria, NY (signatory: Randi Berry)
NY	Astoria	Lucy Gram, Astoria, NY
NY	Astoria	Patricia Noonan, Astoria, NY
NY	Astoria	Christine Wong Yap, Astoria, NY
NY	Boston	New England Foundation for the Arts, Boston, NY (signatory: Cathy Edwards)
NY	Briarcliff Manor	The New Collectives, Briarcliff Manor, NY (signatory: Giverny Petitmermet)
NY	Bronx	Bronx Arts Ensemble, Bronx, NY (signatory: Ellen Pollan)
NY	Bronx	En Foco, Inc, Bronx, NY (signatory: Bill Aguado)
NY	Bronx	Grantmakers in the Arts, Bronx, NY (signatory: Edwin Torres)
NY	Bronx	Lehman College Ctr for Perf. Arts, Bronx, NY (signatory: Eva Bornstein)

NY	Bronx	Evy Mayer, Bronx, NY
NY	Bronxville	Yvonne Marceau, Bronxville, NY
NY	Brookklyn	Amanda Miller, Brookklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Artadia, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: April Swanson)
NY	Brooklyn	Artichoke Dance Company, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Lynn Neuman)
NY	Brooklyn	ArtsPool, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Ellen Shadburn)
NY	Brooklyn	Asgard Audio, LLC, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Nathan Odden)
NY	Brooklyn	Asian American Arts Alliance, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Lisa Gold)
NY	Brooklyn	Association of Teaching Artists, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Heleya De Barros)
NY	Brooklyn	Beth Morrison Projects, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Beth Morrison)
NY	Brooklyn	Brooklyn Raga Massive, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: David Freeman)
NY	Brooklyn	C. H. Mackellar, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Christine Mackellar)
NY	Brooklyn	Clever Girl Productions, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Patrice Miller)
NY	Brooklyn	Club Crystal Blue, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Lan Xu)
NY	Brooklyn	Dancewave, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Diane Jacobowitz)
NY	Brooklyn	Foghorn, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Jesse Bonnell)
NY	Brooklyn	Freelancers Union, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Rafael Espinal)
NY	Brooklyn	Grand Pistachio, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Rachel Sullivan)
NY	Brooklyn	Hedgepig Ensemble Theatre, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Mary Candler)
NY	Brooklyn	Hook & Eye Theater, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Carrie Heitman)
NY	Brooklyn	How to Vote Project, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Andrew White)
NY	Brooklyn	International Studio & Curatorial Program, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Susan Hapgood)
NY	Brooklyn	Kickstarter, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Patton Hindle)
NY	Brooklyn	Letter of Marque Theater Co., Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Scarlet Rivera)

NY	Brooklyn	LG Capital for Culture, LLC, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Lauren Gibbs)
NY	Brooklyn	LitNet, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Katie Freeman)
NY	Brooklyn	New York Foundation for the Arts, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Michael Royce)
NY	Brooklyn	Nine Muses Travel, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Danielle Dybiec)
NY	Brooklyn	Page Seventy-Three Productions, Inc., Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Amanda Feldman)
NY	Brooklyn	Parallel Exit , Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Mark Lonergan)
NY	Brooklyn	Parallel Exit Inc., Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Mark Lonergan)
NY	Brooklyn	Piehole, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Jeff Wood)
NY	Brooklyn	Spellbound Theatre, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Lauren Jost)
NY	Brooklyn	STEPS Theatre, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Irina Stepnova)
NY	Brooklyn	The Civilians, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Steve Cosson)
NY	Brooklyn	The Laundromat Project, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Kemi Ilesanmi)
NY	Brooklyn	The Mercury Store, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: John Del Gaudio)
NY	Brooklyn	Theatre for a New Audience, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Dorothy Ryan)
NY	Brooklyn	Triangle Arts Association, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Nova Benway)
NY	Brooklyn	What Will the Neighbors Say?, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Samuel Adrain)
NY	Brooklyn	Words Without Borders, Brooklyn, NY (signatory: Karen Phillips)
NY	Brooklyn	Henry Aronson, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Harry Barandes, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Sam Bardfeld, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Robert Baron, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Anna Becker, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Danielle Beckmann, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Nicolas Benacerraf, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Sally Berger, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Marcia Bricker, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Yanira Castro, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Rachel Chavkin, Brooklyn, NY

NY	Brooklyn	Gabrielle Davenport, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	JENNIFER DESSINGER, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Bethany Geraghty, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Amy Gijsbers van Wijk, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Fernando Gonzalez, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Yvan Greenberg, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Lorelei Hamm, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Jamie Hand, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Reginald Harris, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Cailln Heffernan, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Lucy Jackson, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Diane Jacobowitz, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Joan Jeffri, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Courtney Knysch, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Alexandra Kotis, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Leah Kreitz, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Karen Lackey, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Marissa Molnar, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Maxine Montilus, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Lynn Nottage, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	AriDy Nox, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Josephine Pizzino, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Scarlet Rivera, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Martin Robert, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Jared Scheinberg, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	K T, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Gamaliel Valle Rosa, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Sacha Wynne, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Rebecca Yaggy, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Ieva Zadina, Brooklyn, NY
NY	Brooklyn	Lisa Anderson , Brooklyn , NY
NY	Brooklyn	Brooke Bell, Brooklyn , NY
NY	Brooklyn	Lauren Nordvig , Brooklyn , NY
NY	Buffalo	The Big Easy in Buffalo, Buffalo, NY (signatory: Tod Kniazuk)
NY	Canaan	2Luck Concepts, Canaan, NY (signatory: Eleanor Oldham)
NY	Catskill	Greene County Council on the Arts\CREATE Council for Resources to Enrich the Arts, Technology & Education, Catskill, NY (signatory: Marline A Martin)
NY	Chestnut Ridge	potterypeace, Chestnut Ridge, NY (signatory: Wendy Morris)

NY	Corning	National Coalition for Arts' Preparedness & Emergency Response, Corning, NY (signatory: Janet Newcomb)
NY	Corning	Jan Newcomb, Corning, NY
NY	Dobbs Ferry	RK&A, Inc., Dobbs Ferry, NY (signatory: Stephanie Downey)
NY	Dobbs Ferry	Jane Alexander, Dobbs Ferry, NY
NY	Dorchester	William Lowe, Dorchester, NY
NY	Durham	Julia Weist, Durham, NY
NY	Elkins Park	Alan Powell, Elkins Park, NY
NY	Endwell	Goodwill Theatre Inc., Endwell, NY (signatory: Naima Kradjian)
NY	Endwell	Naima Kradjian, Endwell, NY
NY	Flushing	Queens Historical Society, Flushing, NY (signatory: Branka Duknic)
NY	Geneva	Kelly Moser-Vogler, Geneva, NY
NY	Hartsdale	Maggie Chow Ceramics, Hartsdale, NY (signatory: Maggie Chow)
NY	Hartsdale	Paula Di Bernardo, Hartsdale, NY
NY	Hector	Themis and Thread , Hector, NY (signatory: Jesse Beardslee)
NY	High Falls	Everyday Arts, Inc., High Falls, NY (signatory: Eric Booth)
NY	Hogansburg	Carey Perkins, Hogansburg, NY
NY	Hudson	Hudson Hall at the historic Hudson Opera House, Hudson, NY (signatory: Tambra Dillon)
NY	Huntington	Sculptors Guild , Huntington, NY (signatory: Thea Lanzisero)
NY	Huntington	Thea Lanzisero, Huntington, NY
NY	Ithaca	Don Tindall, Ithaca, NY
NY	Jamaica	Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning, Jamaica, NY (signatory: Leonard Jacobs)
NY	Jupiter	Utopia Artists, LLC, Jupiter, NY (signatory: Wendy Kay)
NY	Kenmore	Elizabeth Oldfield, Kenmore, NY
NY	Lake Placid	Meredith Prime, Lake Placid, NY
NY	Little Deer Isle	Douglas Wilson, Little Deer Isle, NY
NY	Liverpool	Gorilla Rep NYC, Liverpool, NY (signatory: Christopher Sanderson)
NY	Liverpool	USITT, Liverpool, NY (signatory: David Grindle)
NY	Long Island City	Chocolate Factory Theater, Long Island City, NY (signatory: Sheila Lewandowski)

NY	Long Island City	LaGuardia Performing Arts Center, Long Island City, NY (signatory: Steven Hitt)
NY	Loudonville	Christian Vincent, Loudonville, NY
NY	Malden on Hudson	live Sounds, Malden on Hudson, NY (signatory: isabel soffer)
NY	Medford	Linda Unger, Medford, NY
NY	Morris	KimL Pottery, Morris, NY (signatory: Kim Lheureux)
NY	Mount Kisco	Mary Johnson, Mount Kisco, NY
NY	New York	The Drilling Company Theatrical Productions, New York, NY (signatory: Hamilton Clancy)
NY	New Berlin	Golden Artist Colors, Inc., New Berlin, NY (signatory: Mark Golden)
NY	New Paltz	Unison Arts, New Paltz, NY (signatory: Alexandra Baer)
NY	New Rochelle	Lifetime Arts, New Rochelle, NY (signatory: Ed Friedman)
NY	New York	59E59 Theaters, New York, NY (signatory: Brian Beirne)
NY	New York	Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation, New York, NY (signatory: Sanford Hirsch)
NY	New York	Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York, New York, NY (signatory: Corinne Woods)
NY	New York	American Theatre Wing, New York, NY (signatory: Heather Hitchens)
NY	New York	ArtsConnection, New York, NY (signatory: Debra Peltz)
NY	New York	Aubin Pictures, New York, NY (signatory: Christina Bartson)
NY	New York	Beth Morrison Projects, New York, NY (signatory: Elizabeth Morrison)
NY	New York	BiCoastal Productions, New York, NY (signatory: Ron Gartner)
NY	New York	Bond Street Theatre, New York, NY (signatory: Joanna Sherman)
NY	New York	Boomerang Theatre Company, New York, NY (signatory: Tim Errickson)
NY	New York	Boosey & Hawkes, New York, NY (signatory: Kelly Voigt)
NY	New York	Broken Box Mime Theater, New York, NY (signatory: Becky Baumwoll)
NY	New York	Chamber Music America, New York, NY (signatory: Margaret Lioi)

NY	New York	Concord Theatricals, New York, NY (signatory: Kelly Rach)
NY	New York	Concrete Temple Theatre, New York, NY (signatory: Renee Philippi)
NY	New York	Dancing Classrooms, New York, NY (signatory: Nancy Kleaver)
NY	New York	Dramatists Guild of America, New York, NY (signatory: Douglas Wright)
NY	New York	ExtendPUA.org, New York, NY (signatory: Stephanie Freed)
NY	New York	Farragut Fund for Catalan Culture in the U.S. , New York, NY (signatory: Mary Ann Newman)
NY	New York	Foundation for Contemporary Arts, New York, NY (signatory: Stacy Stark)
NY	New York	Gardner Arts Network, New York, NY (signatory: Jeannette Gardner)
NY	New York	Get Empowered, New York, NY (signatory: Emi Gittleman)
NY	New York	globalFEST, Inc, New York, NY (signatory: Isabel Soffer)
NY	New York	Group .BR, New York, NY (signatory: Debora Balardini)
NY	New York	Guitar Mash, New York, NY (signatory: Rebecca Weller)
NY	New York	Hapa Media, New York, NY (signatory: Dana Kreitz)
NY	New York	HERE, New York, NY (signatory: Kristin Marting)
NY	New York	HERE, New York, NY (signatory: Meredith Lynsey Schade)
NY	New York	ICA - Dwyer Cultural Center, New York, NY (signatory: Ademola Olugebefola)
NY	New York	Ice Theatre of New York, Inc., New York, NY (signatory: Jirina Ribbens)
NY	New York	In The Lights, New York, NY (signatory: Amber Henrie)
NY	New York	InVersion Theatre, New York, NY (signatory: William Steinberger)
NY	New York	John Braemas Center of New York University, New York, NY (signatory: Michael Diniscia)
NY	New York	Keen Company, New York, NY (signatory: Ashley DiGiorgi)
NY	New York	Lambda Literary , New York, NY (signatory: Sue Landers)

NY	New York	League of American Orchestras, New York, NY (signatory: Heather Noonan)
NY	New York	Leviathan Lab, New York, NY (signatory: Ariel Estrada)
NY	New York	MAP Fund, New York, NY (signatory: Moira Brennan)
NY	New York	Marquee TV, New York, NY (signatory: Marc Kirschner)
NY	New York	Museum of Arts and Design, New York, NY (signatory: Wendi Parson)
NY	New York	Musical Theatre Factory, New York, NY (signatory: Abigail Grubb)
NY	New York	Naked Angels Theater Company, New York, NY (signatory: Jean Marie McKee)
NY	New York	National Guild for Community Arts Education, New York, NY (signatory: Jonathan Herman)
NY	New York	New Light Theater Project, New York, NY (signatory: Sarah Norris)
NY	New York	New Light TheTer Project, New York, NY (signatory: Claudia Schneider)
NY	New York	New Music USA, New York, NY (signatory: Vanessa Reed)
NY	New York	New Ohio Theatre / NYC , New York, NY (signatory: Robert Lyons)
NY	New York	New York City Arts in Education Roundtable, New York, NY (signatory: Kimberly Olsen)
NY	New York	New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players, New York, NY (signatory: David Wannen)
NY	New York	New York Live Arts, New York, NY (signatory: Kyle Maude)
NY	New York	New Yorkers for Culture & Arts, New York, NY (signatory: Lucy Sexton)
NY	New York	NY Classical Theatre, New York, NY (signatory: Stephen Burdman)
NY	New York	On The Quays, New York, NY (signatory: Nicola Murphy)
NY	New York	Participant Inc, New York, NY (signatory: Lia Gangitano)
NY	New York	Peculiar Works Project, New York, NY (signatory: Ralph Lewis)
NY	New York	Performa, New York, NY (signatory: Esa Nickle)
NY	New York	Piatigorsky Foundation, New York, NY (signatory: Heidi Curtiss)

NY	New York	Ping Chong + Company, New York, NY (signatory: bruce allardice)
NY	New York	Rena Shagan Associates, Inc., New York, NY (signatory: Rena Shagan)
NY	New York	Roundabout Theatre Company, New York, NY (signatory: Julia Levy)
NY	New York	Shakespeare Downtown, New York, NY (signatory: Billie Andersson)
NY	New York	SheNYC Arts, Inc, New York, NY (signatory: Eh-den Perlove)
NY	New York	Sing for Hope, New York, NY (signatory: Camille Zamora)
NY	New York	The 52nd Street Project, Inc., New York, NY (signatory: Carol Ochs)
NY	New York	The Actors Fund, New York, NY (signatory: Barbara Davis)
NY	New York	The Arctic Cycle, New York, NY (signatory: Chantal Bilodeau)
NY	New York	The Drama League, New York, NY (signatory: Bevin Ross)
NY	New York	The New Group, New York, NY (signatory: Adam Bernstein)
NY	New York	THE OFFICE performing arts + film, New York, NY (signatory: Rachel Chanoff)
NY	New York	The Public Theater, New York, NY (signatory: Oskar Eustis)
NY	New York	Theatre Communications Group, New York, NY (signatory: Laurie Baskin)
NY	New York	TheatreMoves Inc, New York, NY (signatory: Paul Rajeckas)
NY	New York	Town Stages, New York, NY (signatory: Robin Sokoloff)
NY	New York	True Love Productions, New York, NY (signatory: Jeannie Donovan Fisher)
NY	New York	Urban Soul Alliance, New York, NY (signatory: Jennifer Ifil-Ryan)
NY	New York	Urban Word/National Youth Poet Laureate Program, New York, NY (signatory: Michael Cirelli)
NY	New York	Vital Theatre Company, New York, NY (signatory: Stephen Sunderlin)
NY	New York	Voyage Theater Company, Inc., New York, NY (signatory: Wayne Maugans)

NY	New York	White Horse Theater Company, New York, NY (signatory: Cyndy Marion)
NY	New York	www.inwoodartworks.nyc, New York, NY (signatory: Aaron Simms)
NY	New York	Young Audiences, Inc., New York, NY (signatory: David Dik)
NY	New York	Tiffany Baran, New York, NY
NY	New York	Alexandria Bellivan, New York, NY
NY	New York	Jessica Bender, New York, NY
NY	New York	Ted Berger, New York, NY
NY	New York	Christa Blatchford, New York, NY
NY	New York	Margaret Carrigan, New York, NY
NY	New York	Caitlin Cassidy, New York, NY
NY	New York	James Chotas, New York, NY
NY	New York	Kaya Chwals, New York, NY
NY	New York	Alison Colby, New York, NY
NY	New York	Harrison Densmore, New York, NY
NY	New York	Ashley DiGiorgi, New York, NY
NY	New York	Cathy Eilers, New York, NY
NY	New York	Rochelle Feinstein, New York, NY
NY	New York	Ruthie Fierberg, New York, NY
NY	New York	Randy Flood, New York, NY
NY	New York	Kate Fox, New York, NY
NY	New York	Emma Griffin, New York, NY
NY	New York	Hallie Griffin, New York, NY
NY	New York	Catherine Gund, New York, NY
NY	New York	Olga Hiiva, New York, NY
NY	New York	Vijay Iyer, New York, NY
NY	New York	Carlos Jerome, New York, NY
NY	New York	Christine Toy Johnson, New York, NY
NY	New York	Hardis Linn-Blanford, New York, NY
NY	New York	Amanda MacBlane, New York, NY
NY	New York	George Malave, New York, NY
NY	New York	Lindsey Maliekel, New York, NY
NY	New York	Lydia Matthews, New York, NY
NY	New York	Caits Meissner, New York, NY
NY	New York	Sari Nordman, New York, NY
NY	New York	Julia O'Brien, New York, NY
NY	New York	Annie Oldakowski, New York, NY
NY	New York	Ashley Ouderkirk, New York, NY
NY	New York	Dan Ozminkowski, New York, NY
NY	New York	Sky Pape, New York, NY
NY	New York	Debra Peltz, New York, NY

NY	New York	andrea prestinario, New York, NY
NY	New York	Matt Renskers, New York, NY
NY	New York	Melissa Riker, New York, NY
NY	New York	Christy Rupp, New York, NY
NY	New York	Robin Schatell, New York, NY
NY	New York	Susan L. Schulman, New York, NY
NY	New York	Patricia Schwadron, New York, NY
NY	New York	Amy Schwartzman, New York, NY
NY	New York	John Sheehy, New York, NY
NY	New York	Nandita Shenoy, New York, NY
NY	New York	Kyle Sircus, New York, NY
NY	New York	Andrew Sotomayor, New York, NY
NY	New York	Griffin Stanton-Ameisen, New York, NY
NY	New York	Peri Stedman, New York, NY
NY	New York	Gabriel Stelian-Shanks, New York, NY
NY	New York	Meredith Suttles, New York, NY
NY	New York	Kay Takeda, New York, NY
NY	New York	Chad Tenorio, New York, NY
NY	New York	Hadley Todoran, New York, NY
NY	New York	Armando Toro, New York, NY
NY	New York	Allyson Urban, New York, NY
NY	New York	Antonio Valverde, New York, NY
NY	New York	Carol Waaser, New York, NY
NY	New York	Clinton Walker, New York, NY
NY	New York	Ashley Renee Watkins, New York, NY
NY	New York	Stuart Williams, New York, NY
NY	New York	Carolyn Wong, New York, NY
NY	New York	Joshua Wynter, New York, NY
NY	New York	Arts Meet Bizness , New York , NY (signatory: Holly Blondin)
NY	New York	Be An #ArtsHero, New York , NY (signatory: Carson Elrod)
NY	New York	GlobalArts to Go, New York , NY (signatory: Jennifer Gittleman)
NY	New York	Latin Reel, New York , NY (signatory: Jesus Hernandez)
NY	New York	New Ohio Theatre / NYC , New York , NY (signatory: Robert Lyons)
NY	New York	Sinking Ship Productions, New York , NY (signatory: Josh Luxenberg)
NY	New York	The Lobbyists, New York , NY (signatory: Tommy Crawford)
NY	New York	Christopher Beck, New York , NY

NY	New York	Christopher Bloodworth, New York , NY
NY	New York	Cody Butcher, New York , NY
NY	New York	Erin Gallagher, New York , NY
NY	New York	Vince Gatton, New York , NY
NY	New York	Mary Gutzi, New York , NY
NY	New York	Wendy Kraemer , New York , NY
NY	New York	Sarah Norris, New York , NY
NY	New York	Julie Pareles, New York , NY
NY	New York	Nikki Walker, New York , NY
NY	New York City	Cody Butcher, New York City, NY
NY	North Adams	Blair Benjamin, North Adams, NY
NY	Nyack	Kate Chisholm, Nyack, NY
NY	Nyack	Laura Shapiro, Nyack, NY
NY	Palenville	Jeff Boyer Productions, Palenville, NY (signatory: Lea Boyer)
NY	Pittsford	BIODANCE, Pittsford, NY (signatory: Missy Pfohl Smith)
NY	Pittsford	TODD JOKL, Pittsford, NY
NY	Pleasantville	Natalya Khorover, Pleasantville, NY
NY	Portland	Portland Stage, Portland, NY (signatory: Anita Stewart)
NY	Purchase	Deb Sommers, Purchase, NY
NY	Queens	Braata Productions, Queens, NY (signatory: Andrew Clarke)
NY	Queens	Tara Zielenski , Queens , NY
NY	Queens Village	Frances Richard, Queens Village, NY
NY	Rhinebeck	Leonardo, the International Society for Arts, Sciences, & Technology; Arizona State University, Rhinebeck, NY (signatory: Diana Ayton-Shenker)
NY	Rifton	JoAnna Ruisi, Rifton, NY
NY	Rochester	Geva Theatre Center, Rochester, NY (signatory: Chris Mannelli)
NY	Rochester	Krysia Mnick, Rochester, NY
NY	Rochester	Rochester Latino Theatre Company, Rochester , NY (signatory: Annette Ramos)
NY	Rockaway Beach	Pamela Popeson, Rockaway Beach, NY
NY	Saranac Lake	Holly Wolff, Saranac Lake, NY
NY	Saugerties	Absolutely Live Entertainment. LLC, Saugerties, NY (signatory: Danny Melnick)
NY	Schenectady	New York Folklore, Schenectady, NY (signatory: Ellen Mchale)

NY	Schenectady	Proctors Collaborative, Schenectady, NY (signatory: Philip Morris)
NY	Schenectady	Bea Farina, Schenectady, NY
NY	Stony Brook	Ken Weitzman, Stony Brook, NY
NY	Sunnyside	Showstopper Entertainment, Sunnyside, NY (signatory: Erin Shields)
NY	Syracuse	Dianna Angell, Syracuse, NY
NY	Syracuse	Laura Bernas, Syracuse, NY
NY	Syracuse	Jennifer Caster, Syracuse, NY
NY	Syracuse	Rocky Love, Syracuse, NY
NY	Troy	Laura Crawford, Troy, NY
NY	Walden	Kimberly Harrison, Walden, NY
NY	Wappingers Falls	Sandra Stratton-Gonzalez, Wappingers Falls, NY
NY	Westbury	Swingtime Big Band, Westbury, NY (signatory: Steven Shaiman)
NY	Westport	Sally J Smith, Westport, NY
NY	Yonkers	Alana Barrett-Adkins, Yonkers, NY
OH	Ada	Kathleen DeVault, Ada, OH
OH	Akron	Akron Symphony Orchestra, Akron, OH (signatory: Paul Jarrett)
OH	Akron	EraAir Theatre Company , Akron, OH (signatory: Tessa Gaffney)
OH	Akron	Kat Wentz, Akron, OH
OH	Althens	Allison Nowak, Althens, OH
OH	Ashtabula	Ashtabula Arts Center, Ashtabula, OH (signatory: Meeghan Humphrey)
OH	Athens	Molly Sowash, Athens, OH
OH	Bowling Green	Kentucky Folklife Program, Bowling Green, OH (signatory: Joel Chapman)
OH	Canton	Errick Freeman, Canton, OH
OH	Celina	Neptune hot glass, Celina, OH (signatory: collette fortin)
OH	Centerville	Sarah Miller, Centerville, OH
OH	Cincinnati	Art on the Streets, Cincinnati, OH (signatory: Margy Waller)
OH	Cincinnati	Carol Ann & Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation, Cincinnati, OH (signatory: Timothy Maloney)
OH	Cincinnati	Contours & Clay, Cincinnati, OH (signatory: Jess Thayer)
OH	Cincinnati	Greater Cincinnati Foundation, Cincinnati, OH (signatory: Rosie Polter)

OH	Cincinnati	millergardette, Cincinnati, OH (signatory: Kathryne Gardette)
OH	Cincinnati	Sam Hitchman Ceramics, Cincinnati, OH (signatory: Sam Hitchman)
OH	Cincinnati	Wave Pool, Cincinnati, OH (signatory: Cal Cullen)
OH	Cincinnati	WordPlay Cincy, Cincinnati, OH (signatory: Libby Hunter)
OH	Cincinnati	Eric Avner, Cincinnati, OH
OH	Cincinnati	Matthew Burton, Cincinnati, OH
OH	Cincinnati	Susan Byrnes, Cincinnati, OH
OH	Cincinnati	Paula Houston, Cincinnati, OH
OH	Cincinnati	Rosie Polter, Cincinnati, OH
OH	Cincinnati	Daniel Rodgers, Cincinnati, OH
OH	Cincinnati	Angel Wuellner, Cincinnati, OH
OH	Cincinnati	Susan Gordy, Cincinnati , OH
OH	Cleveland	Arts Cleveland, Cleveland, OH (signatory: Valerie Schumacher)
OH	Cleveland	BorderLight International Theatre + Fringe Festival, Cleveland, OH (signatory: Cathleen O'Malley)
OH	Cleveland	Sherrie Hauser-Simmons, Cleveland, OH
OH	Cleveland Heights	Jessica Paine, Cleveland Heights, OH
OH	Columbus	Ohio Citizens for the Arts, Columbus, OH (signatory: Angela Meleca)
OH	Columbus	Dale Abrams, Columbus, OH
OH	Columbus	Erin Hoppe, Columbus, OH
OH	Columbus	Stacy Leeman, Columbus, OH
OH	Dayton	Culture Works, Dayton, OH (signatory: Dorie Watts)
OH	Dayton	Our Revolution Ohio, Dayton, OH (signatory: Kathleen Caffrey)
OH	Dayton	Ashlynn McNeal, Dayton, OH
OH	Friendship	Cassie Patterson, Friendship, OH
OH	Granville	Andrew Johns, Granville, OH
OH	Hamiton	Gretchen Radler, Hamiton, OH
OH	Kent	Wick Poetry Center at Kent State University, Kent, OH (signatory: David Hassler)
OH	Kent	David Hassler, Kent, OH
OH	Kent	Tammy Honesty, Kent, OH
OH	Lancaster	Kaitlin Hennessy Art, Lancaster, OH (signatory: Kaitlin Hennessy)
OH	Mentor	Jonah Jacobs, Mentor, OH

OH	New York	Stage Managers' Association (of the United States), New York, OH (signatory: Elynmarie Kazle)
OH	Oxford	MU, Oxford, OH (signatory: ruorong Zhao)
OH	Oxford	Mingyue Cai, Oxford, OH
OH	Oxford	Emma Jackson, Oxford, OH
OH	Oxford	Youngaah Koh, Oxford, OH
OH	Oxford	Yixuan Li, Oxford, OH
OH	Oxford	Kyle Meister, Oxford, OH
OH	Oxford	Kelsi Moore, Oxford, OH
OH	Oxford	Yiyun Shen, Oxford, OH
OH	Oxford	Todd Stuart, Oxford, OH
OH	Oxford	Qinyu Sun, Oxford, OH
OH	Oxford	Qin Wen, Oxford, OH
OH	Oxford	Sarah Wingo, Oxford, OH
OH	Oxford	Sebastian Zheng, Oxford, OH
OH	Rocky River	Colleen Clement, Rocky River, OH
OH	Shaker Heights	Radio on the Lake Theatre, Shaker Heights, OH (signatory: John Watts)
OH	Toledo	Arts Commission of Greater Toledo, Toledo, OH (signatory: Marc Folk)
OH	Trimble	Sherry Davis, Trimble, OH
OH	Warren	Rick Hartley, Warren, OH
OH	Waterville	Anthony Wayne Area Arts Commission, Waterville, OH (signatory: Lisa Exner)
OH	Westlake	About The Stage, LLC, Westlake, OH (signatory: Chris Tilton)
OK	Irvine	Arts Orange County, Irvine, OK (signatory: Richard Stein)
OK	Jackson	MS Alliance for Arts Education, Jackson, OK (signatory: Penny Wallin)
OK	Norman	Resonator Institute, Norman, OK (signatory: Curtis Jones)
OK	Norman	Jeana Gedmin, Norman, OK
OK	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center, Oklahoma City, OK (signatory: Eddie Walker)
OK	Oklahoma City	Oklahomans for the Arts, Oklahoma City, OK (signatory: Tonnie Dosser)
OK	Tulsa	ahha Tulsa, Tulsa, OK (signatory: Lauren Collins)
OK	Tulsa	Arts Alliance Tulsa, Tulsa, OK (signatory: Todd Cunningham)
OK	Tulsa	Joshua Yap, Tulsa, OK

OR	Ashland	Jeremy Eisen, Ashland, OR
OR	Ashland	Ian Schmidt, Ashland, OR
OR	Ashland	MKP, Ashland , OR (signatory: Maria Kelly)
OR	Ashland	Play On Shakespeare, Ashland , OR (signatory: Taylor Bailey)
OR	Baker City	Ginger Savage, Baker City, OR
OR	Corvallis	Jennifer Lommers, Corvallis, OR
OR	Corvallis	Erin Morse, Corvallis, OR
OR	Eugene	Arts and Business Alliance of Eugene, Eugene, OR (signatory: Kelly Johnson)
OR	Hillsboro	Gloria Hatrick, Hillsboro, OR
OR	Portland	Common Ground Arts, Portland, OR (signatory: Kendra Roberts)
OR	Portland	Crave Theatre Company, Portland, OR (signatory: Sarah Andrews)
OR	Portland	Miracle Theatre Group, Portland, OR (signatory: DaÃ±el Malan)
OR	Portland	Miracle Theatre Group, Portland, OR (signatory: Dael Malan)
OR	Portland	Network of Ensemble Theaters, Portland, OR (signatory: Alisha Tonsic)
OR	Portland	Original Practice Shakespeare Festival, Portland, OR (signatory: Brian Saville Allard)
OR	Portland	Portland Center Stage at The Armory, Portland, OR (signatory: Cynthia Fuhrman)
OR	Portland	Regional Arts & Culture Council, Portland, OR (signatory: Madison Cario)
OR	Portland	Shaking the Tree Theatre, Portland, OR (signatory: Samantha Van Der Merwe)
OR	Portland	Stumptown Stages, Portland, OR (signatory: KIRK MOUSER)
OR	Portland	Young Musicians and Artists, Portland, OR (signatory: Neal Spinler)
OR	Portland	Karina Briski, Portland, OR
OR	Portland	Tonya Louise DeCroce, Portland, OR
OR	Portland	Jeff Hawthorne, Portland, OR
OR	Portland	Ann Hudner, Portland, OR
OR	Portland	Teresa Koberstein, Portland, OR
OR	Portland	Leif Schmit, Portland, OR
OR	Portland	Megan Wiebe, Portland, OR
OR	Portland	Theatre Vertigo, Portland , OR (signatory: Jacquelle Davis)

OR	Portland	Maia McCarthy , Portland , OR
OR	Portland	Michelle Traver, Portland , OR
PA	Allentown	Everlasting Time, Allentown, PA (signatory: Patrick McGee)
PA	Allentown	Lehigh Valley Arts Council, Allentown, PA (signatory: Tara Henninger)
PA	Allentown	Marilyn Hazelton, Allentown, PA
PA	Allentown	Julia Marsh, Allentown, PA
PA	Allentown	Paul Nicholson, Allentown, PA
PA	Ambler	Beth Gilbert, Ambler, PA
PA	Berwyn	Jane Moss, Berwyn, PA
PA	Bethlehem	William Christine, Bethlehem, PA
PA	Bethlehem	Dave Fry, Bethlehem, PA
PA	Bethlehem	Winifred Helton-Harmon, Bethlehem, PA
PA	Bethlehem	Mark McKenna, Bethlehem, PA
PA	Boothwyn	Lisa Carroll, Boothwyn , PA
PA	Bradford	University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, Bradford, PA (signatory: Patricia Colosimo)
PA	Camp Hill	Alexander Chadwell, Camp Hill, PA
PA	Carlisle	Reach USA Inc. www.reachusainc.com/, Carlisle, PA (signatory: Jason Reed)
PA	Carlisle	Self employed, Carlisle, PA (signatory: Cheryl Kugler)
PA	Carlisle	Sarah Merritt, Carlisle , PA
PA	Devon	Mary Sugar, Devon, PA
PA	Doylestown	Baylin Artists Management, Doylestown, PA (signatory: Marc Baylin)
PA	Etters	Citizens for the Arts in Pennsylvania, Etters, PA (signatory: Jenny Hershour)
PA	Farmington	Touchstone Center for Crafts, Farmington, PA (signatory: Lindsay Gates)
PA	Fountain Hill	Matthew Wolf, Fountain Hill, PA
PA	Green Lane	Amira Chtourou, Green Lane, PA
PA	Harrisburg	Central Pennsylvania Friends of Jazz, Harrisburg, PA (signatory: Andy Herring)
PA	Lancaster	Susan Gottlieb, Lancaster, PA
PA	Lancaster	Julia Kamanda, Lancaster, PA
PA	Lancaster	Richard Kent, Lancaster, PA
PA	Lancaster	Barry Kornhauser, Lancaster, PA
PA	Lansdowne	Marguerite Price, Lansdowne, PA
PA	Laplume	James Harmon, Laplume, PA

PA	Layton	Peters Valley School of Craft, Layton, PA (signatory: Kristin Muller)
PA	Lewisburg	Johanna Kodlick, Lewisburg, PA
PA	Malvern	Peter Delaurier, Malvern, PA
PA	Media	Joseph Gonzales, Media, PA
PA	Millersville	Claire Giblin, Millersville, PA
PA	Nazareth	Gabe Toth Music Insruction, Nazareth , PA (signatory: Gabe Toth)
PA	Nesquehoning	Marjorie Keiter, Nesquehoning, PA
PA	Newport	Rebecca Covert, Newport, PA
PA	Penn Run	Sandra Trimble, Penn Run, PA
PA	Philadelphi	Ellen Fleurov, Philadelphi, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts, Philadelphia, PA (signatory: Laura Hortz Stanton)
PA	Philadelphia	Esperanza Arts Center, Philadelphia, PA (signatory: Bill Rhoads)
PA	Philadelphia	Georgia E Gregory Interdenominational School of Music, Philadelphia, PA (signatory: Joyce Drayton)
PA	Philadelphia	Georgia E. Gregory Interdenominational School of Music , Philadelphia, PA (signatory: Joyce Drayton)
PA	Philadelphia	Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, Philadelphia, PA (signatory: Priscilla Luce)
PA	Philadelphia	Intercultural Journeys, Philadelphia, PA (signatory: Carly Rapaport-Stein)
PA	Philadelphia	Just Act, Philadelphia, PA (signatory: Lisa Jo Epstein)
PA	Philadelphia	Philadelphia Theatre Company, Philadelphia, PA (signatory: Paige Price)
PA	Philadelphia	The Expressive Hand, Philadelphia, PA (signatory: Marcie Ziskind)
PA	Philadelphia	Tremain Smith Studio, Philadelphia, PA (signatory: Tremain Smith)
PA	philadelphia	worldtown, philadelphia, PA (signatory: ben schneible)
PA	Philadelphia	Bev Agard, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Brey Ann Barrett, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Francis Beaty, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Elliot Bild, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Star Brown, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Margaux Cattelona, Philadelphia, PA

PA	Philadelphia	iwa cliggett, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Kate Dannenberg, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Miriam Davidson, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Gerard Di Falco, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Elizabeth Ellis, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Karen Faulkner, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Laura Frazure, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Velonza Frederick, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Albert Fung, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Paul Giess, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Lonnie Graham, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Morgan CharÃ©ce Hall, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	John Jarboe, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Tracey Jones, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Bruce Katsiff, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Emily King, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Karen Lightner, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Liddy Lindsay, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Julia Lopez, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Virginia Maksymowicz, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	W. Keith Mcmanus, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Dori Miller, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Anne Minich, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Marsha Moss, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Victor North, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Geraldine Oliver, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Sue Patterson, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Odean Pope, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Libby Rosof, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Ben Rossman, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Jill Sablosky, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Kate Stank, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Elizabeth Steiner, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Eddie Stokes, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Jackie Tileston, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Blaise Tobia, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Daniel Tucker, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Kristen Vinh, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Philadelphia	Mark Willie, Philadelphia, PA
PA	Phoenixville	Kathryn Moroney, Phoenixville, PA
PA	Pittsburgh	1Hood Power, Pittsburgh, PA (signatory: Miracle Jones)

PA	Pittsburgh	City Theatre Company, Pittsburgh, PA (signatory: James McNeel)
PA	Pittsburgh	Film Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA (signatory: Kathryn Spitz Cohan)
PA	Pittsburgh	Hemispheric Conversations Urban Art Project, Pittsburgh, PA (signatory: Caitlin Bruce)
PA	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh Center for Arts and media, Pittsburgh, PA (signatory: Mary Brenholts)
PA	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh Fringe Festival, Pittsburgh, PA (signatory: Xela Batchelder)
PA	Pittsburgh	RiverCityBrass, Pittsburgh, PA (signatory: Linda Reznik)
PA	Pittsburgh	Eben Alguire, Pittsburgh, PA
PA	Pittsburgh	Lori Bollinger, Pittsburgh, PA
PA	Pittsburgh	Amber Coppings, Pittsburgh, PA
PA	Pittsburgh	Tuhin Das, Pittsburgh, PA
PA	Pittsburgh	Ryan Dumas, Pittsburgh, PA
PA	Pittsburgh	Rachael Ellis, Pittsburgh, PA
PA	Pittsburgh	Ryan Ferrebee, Pittsburgh, PA
PA	Pittsburgh	Emily Gallagher, Pittsburgh, PA
PA	Pittsburgh	Marya Sea Kaminski, Pittsburgh, PA
PA	Pittsburgh	James McNeel, Pittsburgh, PA
PA	Pittsburgh	Carin Mincemoyer, Pittsburgh, PA
PA	Pittsburgh	Adrienne Wells, Pittsburgh, PA
PA	Shippensburg	Robin Dolbin, Shippensburg, PA
PA	State College	Alyssa Ridder, State College, PA
PA	Whitehall	Tahya, Whitehall, PA (signatory: T. Keenan)
PA	Wilkes Barre	Siegel Artist Management LLC, Wilkes Barre, PA (signatory: Jennifer Morris)
PA	Williamsport	Community Arts Center, Williamsport, PA (signatory: Chuck Still)
PA	Williamsport	Robert Robbins, Williamsport, PA
PA	York	The Cultural Alliance of York County, York, PA (signatory: Kelley Gibson)
PA	York	Nora Dennehy, York, PA
PR	Ponce	Nancy Gonzalez, Ponce, PR
PR	San Juan	Brenna Quigley Aravena, San Juan, PR
RI	Lincoln	Jeanine Went, Lincoln, RI
RI	Providence	Association of Arts Administration Educators (AAAE), Providence, RI (signatory: Lee Ann Adams)

RI	Providence	Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design, Providence, RI (signatory: Deborah Obalil)
RI	Providence	Heather Guidero Jewelry, Providence, RI (signatory: Heather Guidero)
RI	Providence	Andrew Martinez, Providence, RI
RI	Providence	Annu Palakunnathu Matthew, Providence, RI
RI	Westerly	The United Theatre, Westerly, RI (signatory: Tony Nunes)
SC	Athens	International Center for Indigo Culture, Athens, SC (signatory: Heather Powers)
SC	Camden	Heather Powers, Camden, SC
SC	Charleston	Spoleto Festival USA, Charleston, SC (signatory: John Kennedy)
SC	Columbia	Renee Rouillier, Columbia, SC
SC	Durham	Carolina Theatre of Durham, Inc., Durham, SC (signatory: Joseph Student)
SC	Fort Mill	Melanie Cooper, Fort Mill, SC
SC	Fountain Inn	SC Arts Alliance, Fountain Inn, SC (signatory: Gp Mcleer)
SC	Mount Pleasant	Heather McDonald, Mount Pleasant, SC
SC	Pickens	The Rensing Center , Pickens, SC (signatory: Ellen Kochansky)
SC	Rock Hill	Arts Council of York County, Rock Hill, SC (signatory: Deb Heintz)
SC	Tryon	Marianne Carruth, Tryon, SC
SD	Lead	Homestake Opera House, Lead, SD (signatory: Patrick O'Leary)
SD	Sioux Falls	Arts South Dakota, Sioux Falls, SD (signatory: Jim Speirs)
SD	Sioux Falls	Levitt at the Falls, Sioux Falls, SD (signatory: Nancy Halverson)
SD	Sioux Falls	Emily Vidler, Sioux Falls, SD
TN	Bell Buckle	SWH Art Studios, Inc., Bell Buckle, TN (signatory: Sherri Warner Hunter)
TN	Bloomington	American Folklore Society, Bloomington, TN (signatory: Jessica Turner)
TN	Chattanooga	ArtsBuild, Chattanooga, TN (signatory: James McKissic)

TN	Chattanooga	Chattanooga Theatre Centre, Chattanooga, TN (signatory: Rodney Van Valkenburg)
TN	Chattanooga	Tennesseans for the Arts, Chattanooga, TN (signatory: Robert Willie)
TN	Chattanooga	Tara Poole, Chattanooga , TN
TN	College Grove	Marcus Carroll, College Grove, TN
TN	Goodlettsville	Nashville Acoustic Camps, Goodlettsville, TN (signatory: Megan Chowning)
TN	Hendersonville	Jill Massie, Hendersonville, TN
TN	Jonesborough	International Storytelling Center, Jonesborough, TN (signatory: Kiran Sirah)
TN	Kingston Springs	Craig Nutt, Kingston Springs, TN
TN	Knoxville	Arts & Culture Alliance of Greater Knoxville, Knoxville, TN (signatory: Liza Zenni)
TN	Knoxville	Kent Minault, Knoxville, TN
TN	Liberty	Phil Woodward, Liberty, TN
TN	Memphis	ArtsMemphis, Memphis, TN (signatory: Elizabeth Rouse)
TN	Memphis	Buckman Performing Arts Center at St. Mary's, Memphis, TN (signatory: Cindi Younker)
TN	Memphis	SOULSHOCKERS, Memphis, TN (signatory: Allen Averyhart)
TN	Memphis	UrbanArt Commission, Memphis, TN (signatory: Lauren Kennedy)
TN	Memphis	Brin Baucum, Memphis, TN
TN	Memphis	Victor Sawyer, Memphis, TN
TN	Memphis	Leslie Tiscia, Memphis, TN
TN	Mount Juliet	B! Noticed Public Relations, Mount Juliet, TN (signatory: Bev Moser)
TN	Nashville	Arts & Business Council of Greater Nashville, Nashville, TN (signatory: Jill McMillan Palm)
TN	Nashville	Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy, Nashville, TN (signatory: Jay Clayton)
TN	Nashville	Global Education Center, Nashville, TN (signatory: Ellen Gilbert)
TN	Nashville	StageSmart Teaching Artists, Nashville, TN (signatory: Beth Anne Musiker)
TN	Nashville	F Lynne Bachleda, Nashville, TN
TN	Nashville	Kristen Chapman, Nashville, TN
TN	Nashville	Mason Culkin, Nashville, TN
TN	Nashville	Alexandre Frenette, Nashville, TN
TN	Nashville	Wilna Julmiste Taylor, Nashville, TN
TN	Nashville	Megan Kelley, Nashville, TN

TN	Nashville	Caroline Vincent, Nashville, TN
TN	Nashville	Melissa Fuller, Nashville , TN
TN	Utica	Port A Glass Studio & Art Gallery, Utica, TN (signatory: Sheri Hargrove)
TX	Abilene	Sidney Levesque, Abilene, TX
TX	Amarillo	Anne Medlock, Amarillo, TX
TX	Arnaudville	MOJO & The Bayou Gypsies, Arnaudville, TX (signatory: Joseph Modelevsky)
TX	Austin	Artist and Community Connection, Austin, TX (signatory: Theresa Holden)
TX	Austin	Austin Film Society, Austin, TX (signatory: Holly Herrick)
TX	Austin	RunWay Underground - the Evolution Fashion Production Group, Network and Academy , Austin, TX (signatory: Nailah I. Akinyemi-Sankofa)
TX	Austin	Texans for the Arts, Austin, TX (signatory: Ann S Graham)
TX	Austin	Texas Folklife, Austin, TX (signatory: Charlie Lockwood)
TX	Austin	James Burnside, Austin, TX
TX	Austin	Ann Stuart Graham, Austin, TX
TX	Austin	Emily Hermans, Austin, TX
TX	Austin	Olivia Jimenez, Austin, TX
TX	Austin	Peggy Lamb, Austin, TX
TX	Austin	Jay Long, Austin, TX
TX	Austin	Aneka Patel, Austin, TX
TX	Austin	Jillian Strandemo, Austin, TX
TX	Austin	Sound Music Cities, Austin , TX (signatory: Don Pitts)
TX	Beaumont	Southeast Texas Arts Council, Beaumont, TX (signatory: Sue Bard)
TX	Beaumount	Challenged Conquistadors, Inc., Beaumount, TX (signatory: Dr. Shaun Best)
TX	Dallas	Dallas Area Cultural Advocacy Coalition, Dallas, TX (signatory: Augustine Jalomo)
TX	Dallas	Dallas Theater Center, Dallas, TX (signatory: Jeffrey Woodward)
TX	Dallas	Kitchen Dog Theater, Dallas, TX (signatory: Tim Johnson)
TX	Dallas	Zannie Voss, Dallas, TX

TX	Dallas	Azure Arts & Entertainment Services, LLC Pending, Dallas , TX (signatory: Jonathan Langley)
TX	Houston	Alley Theatre, Houston, TX (signatory: Dean Gladden)
TX	Houston	Dance Source Houston, Houston, TX (signatory: Mollie Miller)
TX	Houston	Kale Contemporary Arts, Houston, TX (signatory: Akeem Agbelekale)
TX	Houston	Rivkah French Choreography, Houston, TX (signatory: Rivkah French)
TX	Houston	Society for the Performing Arts, Houston, Houston, TX (signatory: Meg Booth)
TX	Houston	Heather Fails, Houston, TX
TX	Houston	Jennifer Mabus, Houston, TX
TX	Houston	Dr. Roger G. Moore, Houston, TX
TX	Houston	Robin Reagler, Houston, TX
TX	Lubbock	Jamison Driskill, Lubbock, TX
TX	Lufkin	Angelina Arts Alliance, Lufkin, TX (signatory: Jennifer Allen)
TX	Mansfield	Robert Townsend, Mansfield, TX
TX	Marble Falls	Lisa Butler Fine Arts, Marble Falls, TX (signatory: Lisa Butler)
TX	Richardson	Texas Jewish Arts Association, Richardson, TX (signatory: Nan Phillips)
TX	Round Rock	Tom Nevill, Round Rock, TX
TX	Round Rock	Scot Wilkinson, Round Rock, TX
TX	San Antonio	Blue Star Contemporary, San Antonio, TX (signatory: Mary Heathcott)
TX	San Antonio	Esperanza Peace and Justice Center, San Antonio, TX (signatory: Graciela Sanchez)
TX	San Antonio	Southwest School of Art, San Antonio, TX (signatory: Debra Del Toro)
TX	San Antonio	The Public Theater of San Antonio, San Antonio, TX (signatory: Jeff Morden)
TX	San Antonio	Crystal Cantu, San Antonio, TX
TX	San Antonio	Marisa Hernandez, San Antonio, TX
TX	San Antonio	Christopher Ryan Quiroz, San Antonio, TX
TX	San Antonio	Graciela Sanchez, San Antonio, TX
TX	San Antonio	Regina Sanders, San Antonio, TX
TX	San Antonio	Jenna Takach, San Antonio, TX
TX	San Antonio	Susan Westberg , San Antonio , TX
TX	Sugar Land	Gold Iwe, Sugar Land , TX

TX	The Woodlands	Dede Fox, The Woodlands, TX
TX	Wichita Falls	Martin Camacho, Wichita Falls, TX
TX	Wichita Falls	Catherine Prose, Wichita Falls, TX
UT	Bountiful	Jan Harris Smith, Bountiful, UT
UT	Free Union	The Rev. Dr. Janet S. McDonald, Free Union, UT
UT	Green River	Epicenter, Green River, UT (signatory: Maria Sykes)
UT	Park City	David Dynak, Park City, UT
UT	Price	Brent Innes, Price, UT
UT	Salt Lake City	Utah Cultural Alliance, Salt Lake City, UT (signatory: Crystal Young-Otterstrom)
UT	Salt Lake City	Jonna Ramey, Salt Lake City, UT
UT	Sandy	Kriska Paint on Silk, Sandy, UT (signatory: Jan Mayer)
VA	Alexandria	Burnt Store Studio, Alexandria, VA (signatory: James Watson)
VA	Alexandria	National Art Education Association (NAEA), Alexandria, VA (signatory: Mario Rossero)
VA	Alexandria	Florence Babatunde, Alexandria, VA
VA	Alexandria	Bruce Falk, Alexandria, VA
VA	Alexandria	Rocio Mendoza, Alexandria, VA
VA	Alexandria	Anne O'Dell, Alexandria, VA
VA	Alexandria	Diane Ruggiero, Alexandria, VA
VA	Alexandria	Ann Stock, Alexandria, VA
VA	Arlington	American Alliance of Museums, Arlington, VA (signatory: Barry Szczesny)
VA	Arlington	Arlington Arts, Arlington, VA (signatory: Michelle Isabelle-Stark)
VA	Arlington	Arlington Arts Center, Arlington, VA (signatory: Holly Koons)
VA	Arlington	Bowen McCauley Dance Company, Arlington, VA (signatory: Lucy Bowen McCauley)
VA	Arlington	Embracing Arlington Arts, Arlington, VA (signatory: Janet Kopenhaver)
VA	Arlington	Encore Stage & Studio, Arlington, VA (signatory: Sara Duke)
VA	Arlington	Guillotine Theatre, Arlington, VA (signatory: Catherine Aselford)
VA	Arlington	Prio Bangla, Inc., Arlington, VA (signatory: Pryalal Karmakar)

VA	Arlington	Signature Theatre, Arlington, VA (signatory: Maggie Boland)
VA	Arlington	Robin Bergman, Arlington, VA
VA	Arlington	Marissa Works, Arlington, VA
VA	Arlington	Laurel Hausler , Arlington , VA
VA	Baltimore	Baltimore Center Stage, Baltimore, VA (signatory: Michael Ross)
VA	Bethesda	Round House Theatre, Bethesda, VA (signatory: Ed Zakreski)
VA	Blacksburg	Corrie Besse, Blacksburg, VA
VA	Blacksburg	Margaret Lawrence, Blacksburg, VA
VA	Boston	Goodlife Theater, Boston, VA (signatory: Jeanne Wall)
VA	Boston	The Goodlife Theater & B&B Inc., Boston, VA (signatory: Joe Pipik)
VA	Fairfax	Deidre Richardson, Fairfax, VA
VA	Fairfax	Donald Russell, Fairfax, VA
VA	Falls Church	Janice Zucker, Falls Church, VA
VA	Falls Church	Barbara Gholz, Falls Church , VA
VA	Fredericksburg	National Dance Society, Fredericksburg, VA (signatory: Cheryl Stafford)
VA	Harrisonburg	Donna Heatwole, Harrisonburg, VA
VA	Herndon	Tony Shivers, Herndon, VA
VA	Manassas	Jazmyn Beauchan , Manassas, VA
VA	Manassas	Shantay Robinson, Manassas, VA
VA	New York	OPERA America, New York, VA (signatory: Tony Shivers)
VA	Norfolk	Business Consortium for Arts Support, Norfolk, VA (signatory: Lisa Wigginton)
VA	Norfolk	Young Audiences of Virginia Inc, Norfolk, VA (signatory: Christine Everly)
VA	Norfolk	Debra Burrell, Norfolk, VA
VA	Reston	Shanice Mason, Reston, VA
VA	Richmond	Firehouse Theatre, Richmond, VA (signatory: Joel Bassin)
VA	Richmond	Sheffield Global Arts Management, Richmond, VA (signatory: Francine Sheffield)
VA	Richmond	Carolyn Cox, Richmond, VA
VA	Richmond	Ellyn Parker, Richmond, VA
VA	Richmond	Janet Starke, Richmond, VA
VA	Richmond	Cathy Welborn, Richmond, VA
VA	Roanoke	Roanoke Cultural Endowment, Roanoke, VA (signatory: Shaleen Powell)

VA	Staunton	Janly Jaggard, Staunton , VA
VA	Sterling	123 Andros, Sterling, VA (signatory: AndrÃ©s Salguero)
VA	Sterling	Christina Sanabria, Sterling, VA
VA	Vienna	Kenneth Lewis, Vienna, VA
VA	Virginia Beach	Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum, Virginia Beach, VA (signatory: Charles Hightower)
VA	Virginia Beach	Virginia Beach Art Center, Virginia Beach, VA (signatory: Margaret Foltz)
VA	Virginia Beach	Emily Labows, Virginia Beach, VA
VA	Waynesboro	Joan Ranzini, Waynesboro, VA
VA	West Augusta	Angus Carter, West Augusta, VA
VT	Bennington	New World Classics, Bennington, VT (signatory: Kerby Lovallo)
VT	Burlington	Big Heavy World, Burlington, VT (signatory: James Lockridge)
VT	Middlebury	Middlebury Studio School, Middlebury, VT (signatory: Mary Lower)
VT	Montpelier	CERF+ -- the Artists Safety Net, Montpelier, VT (signatory: Cornelia Carey)
VT	Montpelier	Community Engagement Lab, Montpelier, VT (signatory: Paul Gambill)
VT	Montpelier	Vermont Arts Council, Montpelier, VT (signatory: Amy Cunningham)
VT	Montpelier	Dustin Byerly, Montpelier, VT
VT	Morrisville	Tricia Follert, Morrisville , VT
VT	South Burlington	Gillian Nanton, South Burlington, VT
VT	Wilder	Music to Life, Wilder, VT (signatory: Elizabeth Stookey Sunde)
VT	Woodstock	Zach Niles, Woodstock, VT
WA	Bellingham	Annika Sampson, Bellingham, WA
WA	Brinnon	Lee Daniels Pottery, Brinnon, WA (signatory: Lee Daniels)
WA	Edmonds	Richard Beckerman, Edmonds, WA
WA	Helena	The Myrna Loy, Helena, WA (signatory: Krys Holmes)
WA	Kent	City of Kent Arts Commission, Kent, WA (signatory: Ronda Billerbeck)
WA	Kirkland	Trish Brownlee, Kirkland, WA
WA	Lakewood	Katie Lappier, Lakewood, WA
WA	Langley	Jill Kroh, Langley, WA

WA	Mount Vernon	Underground Writing, Mount Vernon, WA (signatory: Matt Malyon)
WA	Olympia	Arbutus Folk School, Olympia, WA (signatory: Hillary Tully)
WA	Redmond	Rachel Ciprotti, Redmond, WA
WA	Seatlle	Kirkland Arts Center, Seatlle, WA (signatory: Kelly Dylla)
WA	Seattle	Academy of Burlesque, Seattle, WA (signatory: Indigo Blue)
WA	Seattle	Arts Corps, Seattle, WA (signatory: James Miles)
WA	Seattle	ArtsEd Washington, Seattle, WA (signatory: Danielle Gahl)
WA	Seattle	ArtsFund, Seattle, WA (signatory: Katy Corella)
WA	Seattle	Assembly Fundraising , Seattle, WA (signatory: Talia Wright)
WA	Seattle	Esther Ervin Creative Source, LLC, Seattle, WA (signatory: Esther Ervin)
WA	Seattle	Inspire Washington, Seattle, WA (signatory: Manuel (Manny) Cawaling)
WA	Seattle	King County Creative, Seattle, WA (signatory: Kate Becker)
WA	Seattle	Moving Minds Dance, Seattle, WA (signatory: Ciara Mccormack Greenwalt)
WA	Seattle	Pottery Northwest, Seattle, WA (signatory: Jaime White)
WA	Seattle	Reframing Rural, Seattle, WA (signatory: Megan Torgerson)
WA	Seattle	Sabando Design, Seattle, WA (signatory: Kristeena Sabando)
WA	Seattle	Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, Seattle, WA (signatory: Randy Engstrom)
WA	Seattle	Seattle Office of Film + Music, Seattle, WA (signatory: Chris Swenson)
WA	Seattle	Seattle Rep, Seattle, WA (signatory: Jeffrey Herrmann)
WA	Seattle	Ana Maria Campoy, Seattle, WA
WA	Seattle	Ruth Dickey, Seattle, WA
WA	Seattle	Mark Emerson, Seattle, WA
WA	Seattle	Roxy Hornbeck, Seattle, WA
WA	Seattle	Andy Jensen, Seattle, WA
WA	Seattle	Susan LaSalle, Seattle, WA
WA	Seattle	James Lobb, Seattle, WA
WA	Seattle	Jasmine Mahmoud, Seattle, WA

WA	Seattle	Johamy Morales, Seattle, WA
WA	Seattle	Yuka Petz, Seattle, WA
WA	Seattle	Meghan Sebold, Seattle, WA
WA	Seattle	Bret Torbeck, Seattle, WA
WA	Seattle	John Ullman, Seattle, WA
WA	Seattle	Amy Wimmer, Seattle, WA
WA	Seattle	Karin Stevens Dance, Seattle , WA (signatory: Karin Stevens)
WA	Shoreline	Kate Langsdorf, Shoreline, WA
WA	Spokane	The Alliance for Media Arts + Culture, Spokane, WA (signatory: Wendy Levy)
WA	Tacoma	Tacoma Arts Live, Tacoma, WA (signatory: David Fischer)
WA	Tacoma	David Fischer, Tacoma, WA
WA	Tacoma	Stacey Guadnola, Tacoma, WA
WA	Tacoma	Nicole Hume, Tacoma, WA
WA	Tacoma	Clint Johnson, Tacoma, WA
WA	Tacoma	Jacqueline Richter, Tacoma, WA
WA	Tacoma	Chris Tubig, Tacoma, WA
WA	Tacoma	Alan Uhlemann, Tacoma, WA
WA	Tacoma	Lacey Wright, Tacoma, WA
WA	Tieton	Tieton Arts & Humanities, Tieton, WA (signatory: Amber Knox)
WA	Vancouver	Erik Smith, Vancouver, WA
WI	Austin	Holden & Arts Associates, Austin, WI (signatory: Spring Karlo)
WI	Brookfield	Joey Welden Design LLC., Brookfield, WI (signatory: Joseph Welden)
WI	De Pere	Ellen Rosewall, De Pere, WI
WI	Eagle River	Turtle Island Artworks, Eagle River, WI (signatory: Anthony John)
WI	Fish Creek	Northern Sky Theater, Fish Creek, WI (signatory: Dave Maier)
WI	Green Bay	Dreams Alive, Green Bay, WI (signatory: Betty Willems)
WI	Green Bay	Jean Wentz, Green Bay, WI
WI	Madison	Arts Wisconsin, Madison, WI (signatory: Anne Katz)
WI	Madison	CODAworx, Madison, WI (signatory: Toni Sikes)
WI	Madison	Lindsay Flowers Koh, Madison, WI
WI	Madison	Anna Heinen, Madison, WI
WI	Madison	Sally Kraus, Madison, WI

WI	Madison	Loni Maximoff , Madison, WI
WI	Madison	Jenifer Wetterau, Madison, WI
WI	Madison	Lee Wilson-Hayes, Madison, WI
WI	Milwaukee	BGzDInc Brand, Milwaukee, WI (signatory: Bobby Gene Buggs Jr)
WI	Milwaukee	Cactus Club, Milwaukee, WI (signatory: Kelsey Kaufmann)
WI	Milwaukee	Imagine MKE, Milwaukee, WI (signatory: David Lee)
WI	Milwaukee	TimeSlips, Inc., Milwaukee, WI (signatory: Carol Varney)
WI	Milwaukee	Woodland Pattern Book Center, Milwaukee, WI (signatory: Jenny Gropp)
WI	Milwaukee	Chike Johnson, Milwaukee, WI
WI	Milwaukee	Tina La Prest, Milwaukee, WI
WI	Milwaukee	Lisa Sottile, Milwaukee, WI
WI	Racine	Racine Art Museum, Racine, WI (signatory: Bruce Pepich)
WI	Rochester	Rochester Fringe Festival, Rochester, WI (signatory: Erica Fee)
WI	Sheboygan	Sarah Muehlbauer, Sheboygan, WI
WI	Stevens Point	Valerie Cisler, Stevens Point, WI
WI	Stevens Point	Karen Ann Hoffman, Stevens Point, WI
WI	Stevens Point	Tyler Marchant, Stevens Point, WI
WI	Sturgeon Bay	Joseph Mitchell, Sturgeon Bay, WI
WI	Waterloo	William Waite, Waterloo, WI
WI	Wausau	Jim O'Connell, Wausau, WI
WI	Wauwatosa	Todd Hollfelder, Wauwatosa, WI
WI	Wauwatosa	Jane Woodward, Wauwatosa, WI
WI	Whitewater	Lynn Shoemaker, Whitewater, WI
WV	Augusta	Susan Feller, Augusta, WV
WV	Belington	Kylie Proudfoot-Payne, Belington, WV
WV	Elkins	Dani Cade, Elkins, WV
WV	Green Bank	K. Stauffer, Green Bank, WV
WV	Shepherdstown	Contemporary American Theater Festival, Shepherdstown, WV (signatory: Ed Herendeen)
WV	Shepherdstown	Shepherd University, Shepherdstown, WV (signatory: Robert Tudor)
WV	Shepherdstown	Nicole Smith, Shepherdstown, WV
WV	Wheeling	Camille Devlin, Wheeling, WV

WY	Cheyenne	Arts Cheyenne, Cheyenne, WY (signatory: Bill Lindstrom)
WY	Cheyenne	Wyoming Arts Alliance, Cheyenne, WY (signatory: Bill Lindstrom)
WY	Jackson	Jackson Hole Public Art, Jackson, WY (signatory: Carrie Geraci)
WY	Laramie	Laramie Public Art Coalition, Laramie, WY (signatory: Laura McDermit)

To Whom It May Concern,
I'm writing to endorse the CERA Bill, and encourage increased Federal support for artists working in communities.

As a CETA artist for one year in the late 1970s, I learned firsthand how impactful artists can be working in communities throughout Minneapolis. I was paid to work part time on my art and part time in areas throughout the city. I was given the job title "Gallery Director" for City Art Productions—the name of the program—which was a partnership of the Minneapolis Arts Commission and the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce (the first and only time these entities have partnered!). I was given a desk and phone at City Hall, and told that "the *city* was my gallery"! I learned on the job how to connect the energy and talents and idas of artists with the needs and opportunities of the community.

My CETA year, thanks to enlightened Federal funding, was an amazing experience, very empowering, and it led to the formation, in 1978, of Forecast Public Art, a nonprofit that grew into a field leader. We gave grants to artists throughout the state, published the only magazine devoted to public art (*Public Art Review*), and established a nationally revered consulting program that allowed Forecast to earn revenues and grow staff.

I recently retired, but Forecast lives on under new leadership, generating an annual budget of almost $1 million! From the small acorn that was the CETA program in Minneapolis, a mighty oak grew and spread its branches, generating thousands of its own acorns. The return on investment is staggering. I encourage you to explore Forecast's website to better understand the work being done now, and see examples of projects made possible by the organization: https://forecastpublicart.org/

When artists are given a small amount of support to do something they care about or believe in, something that feeds their creativity, it results in multiple benefits for the community, the economy, and the wellbeing of entire cities!

During the global pandemic, artists have increasingly assumed important roles in helping citizens heal, grieve, honor, and cope, as well as rebuild. Now is the time to invest in the creative sector, and put artists to work in meaningful ways. I am certain the return on this investment will be significant, and the ripple effects will benefit generations to come.

I wish you success with your efforts and your deliberations, and look forward to seeing the next Federal jobs program for artists come to fruition.

Sincerely,
Jack Becker
Founder Emeritus, Forecast Public Art

February 3, 2022

Jeanie Bergen
7011 1/2 Fountain Ave
Los Angeles, CA 90028

Adam B Schiff
U S House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Adam B Schiff,

I am writing to you as an Television Writer and constituent of the 28th Congressional I District of California, regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021

America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4 3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S economy.

The power and promise is clear. What is also clear is the peril we are now facing. With thousands of our small businesses shuttered, 2.7 million arts and culture workers unemployed, and at least $150 billion in losses (in just a three-month period), we are facing an economic cataclysm locally and nationally. Therefore, I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector. These common-sense initiatives include tax breaks and meaningful investment which will spur job growth and innovation, bringing local jobs to your district and increasing tax revenue.

These bills include the bipartisan **HR4750,** the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act, which would immediately give a tax break to rank-and-file arts workers who are in immediate need of economic relief, in addition to: **HR5019,** the bipartisan Creative Economy Revitalization Act; **HR6381,** the bipartisan Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act; the Arts Education for All Act; **HR1945**, the Help Independent Tracks Succeed Act; **HR7011**, the Pandemic Risk Insurance Act; **HR3054**, the 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act, and **HR2380,** the Saving Transit Arts Resources Act. Additionally, I urge you to establish a congressional commission to further study the economic impact of the creative worker in America as well as the creation of a Department and Secretary of Arts and Culture to oversee investment in the Creative Economy. In doing so, you will improve the lives of all Americans today and for the century ahead.

Our fates are tied together.

Sincerely,

Jeanie Bergen

For centuries, art has been an integral part of defining culture. Art is how we pass on our story, how we represent our values, and how we quantify our growth as a people. Arguably, the greatest global leaders have focused on inspiring and funding the artistic expression of their constituents, from the miniature paintings of Akbar the Great, to the federal art and recreation projects of

Roosevelt's administration.

Art is celebrated as an act of "self-care"-- both on the creative and consumptive ends-- and many school curricula have even converted from STEM to STEAM, further solidifying the necessity of artistic outlet for youth and adults alike.

The Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA) is both necessary and groundbreaking legislation, helping to define our shifting culture as we move past the pandemic. CERA will not only enable hundreds of struggling artists to return to their craft, inspiring and uplifting our communities, but it will allow us to refocus our image of what it means to be the United States of America by re-centering creative the forces of our country.

Our communities need art more than ever, and CERA is a great first step towards embodying the creativity that we are collectively capable of. Thank you so much for your work on and support of this legislation.

****

Jessica Snow

Congressional Testimony
John Kristiansen New York, Inc.
1/28/22

Background

When John Kristiansen started his costume shop in his apartment in 1998, he had a staff of two: himself and a stitcher named Martha. At the time, he couldn't imagine how his shop would look in March 2020: his name would be on the door of his Midtown Manhattan shop; he would employ 52 artisans from around the world--Azerbaijan, China, Columbia, Ecuador, Germany, India, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Poland, Russa, Ukraine and America; his shop would include dressmaking, tailoring and crafts/millinery departments making custom costumes for stage and screen; and at his side would be his best friend as one of his Project Managers, his life partner, Brian Blythe, as his Business Manager, and of course, Martha.

Brian joined John's staff temporarily in October 2011. A theatre director and administrator, he was between jobs and came in to help John with his books. In November 2011, their first child arrived, as they had begun the process of building their family through the New Jersey Foster Care system. They quickly realized that running the business together would allow them the most flexibility--but, at the time, they could never have imagined how their *family* would look in March 2020. Now with four kids at home, the pair spend most nights putting the kids to bed, then working on various bits of shop business.


John Kristiansen with First Hand, Anna Kimmel.

All of that changed the week of March 9, 2020. Brian wasn't feeling great--he thought he had the flu. Instead of going to the opening night of *Six* on Broadway, John ended up heading to the hospital on March 12th, unable to breathe. He was given a Covid-19 test, but didn't get his results until March 15th; he was one of the first patients to test positive for Covid-19.

By the time he was released, the entire entertainment industry had shut down. Theatre, dance, opera, cruise ships, theme parks, live entertainment--all of it stopped.

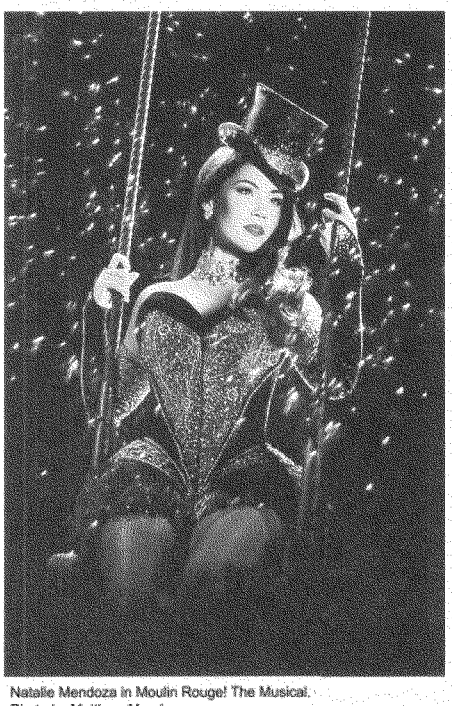
The Costume Industry Coalition

In May 2020, Brian and John began organizing the Costume Industry Coalition (CIC), to advocate for the survival of the custom costume industry in New York City. They began reaching out to colleagues in the industry, and quickly coalesced with 55 small businesses that create, supply and care for costumes seen on stages and screens worldwide.

CIC Members:

- Include full service costume shops, dressmakers, tailors, milliners, embroiderers, pleaters, fabric painters, fabric printers, specialty vendors, the last costume rental shop in NYC, the dry cleaner to Broadway;
- Serve world-class designers to realize their unique artistic visions;
- Employed over 500 artisans prepandemic who hailed from 39 different countries;
- Had a workforce that was 73% women and 31% immigrant;
- Lost over $26.6 million in gross revenue in 2020
- Ended 2020 with collective debt of over $3.5 million.

All small businesses that support a variety of performing arts mediums, CIC Members were not in the position to close down their shops to pivot to a zoom model while the majority of the entertainment industry was dormant for 16 months. A costume shop is a mini-factory with large machines and work tables, so the majority of debt sustained was due to overhead costs that accumulated while waiting for the entertainment industries to start back up. Television and film production in New York City restarted first around November 2020, but the volume of work was not robust enough to support the entire cottage industry.



Natalie Mendoza in Moulin Rouge! The Musical.
Photo by Matthew Murphy.

At the beginning of the pandemic, CIC Members used the Broadway production of *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* as a case study. To explain the process of making couture costumes for the stage, they produced a short video called Page to Stage, which showed how a costume is developed from a costume designer's two-dimensional sketch into a three-dimensional piece of moving art meant to dance and sing eight shows a week.

For Broadway, the costume designer created 210 sketches representing 793 costume pieces for the original production. It took 180 artisans over 36,000 labor hours to then create them.

Multiple costume shops were used to create the costumes. For the look to the left, a millinery shop, dressmaking shop, glove making shop and specialty undergarment vendor were used. The costumes are laundered by a dry cleaner specializing in costume care. It is the survival of this ecosystem for which the CIC is advocating.

Impact on Workforce

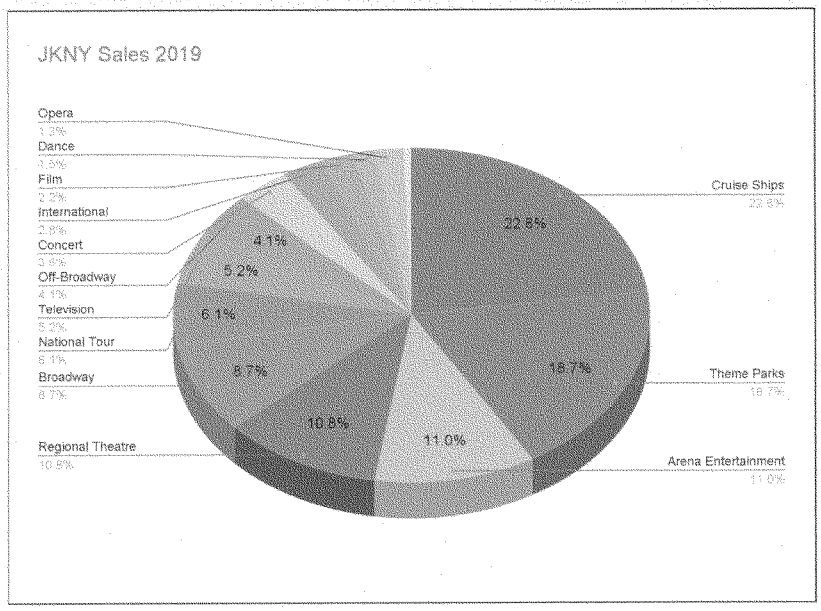
Many CIC Members have noted that their workforce has been depleted. Many of their older employees have decided to retire early. Some younger workers have left New York City, finding it impossible to financially survive during the shutdown. Some workers have entered into the television/film industry where they can earn $65/hour to hem pants–CIC Members cannot compete with those hourly wage rates. Omicron has also hit hard, causing gaps in the workflow as employees stay home to recover while simultaneously impacting CIC Members who are paying for sick leave. It continues to be a daily struggle to reconstruct a stable workforce.

Fundraising

As playwright Jeremy O. Harris wrote in an article in January 2021, "We shouldn't have to GoFundMe an entire industry, yet we are." The Costume Industry Coalition partnered with a non-profit 501(c)3, the Artisans Guild of America (AGA), to raise monies through private donations for the CIC Recovery Fund. They have created a number of initiatives in order to alleviate the financial burden brought on by the shutdown. To date, the AGA has granted the CIC Members $500,000 toward their $4 million goal to shore up their losses.

Industry Analysis

Using John Kristiansen New York, Inc. (JKNY) as a case study, the chart below demonstrates the various mediums where their costumes are seen:



JKNY ended 2019 with a profit, but to be clear, the profit margin was a slim 2.5%. For 2020, due to the shutdown, gross revenue was down 71%, and the year showed a catastrophic -849% net income loss when compared to 2019. The shop remained largely closed until August of 2020, when a skeleton staff began a few projects and finished projects that remained from earlier in the year. JKNY did not begin a full-fledged restaffing until August 2021.

The books for 2021 are currently being reconciled, but gross revenue is estimated at 51% of 2019 numbers. It indicates that, while various entertainment industries are starting back, the volume of work has yet to return–and it is unclear when it will fully rebound. Most importantly, JKNY is still carrying $275,000 in back rent with no clear path toward reconciling that debt.

Recovery Packages

While there have been some relief packages offered, there have been various issues with them:

- The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) provided relief, but the biggest challenge was that PPP funds were primarily for payroll. To be forgivable, only 40% could be used for overhead; more flexibility was needed for small businesses in a sector that was completely shut down.
- The American Rescue Plan sent money to the states to provide relief for the hardest hit sectors. New York State set aside $800 million for small business relief, but the parameters (revenue caps, ineligibility if federal relief was received) made JKNY ineligible. The funds were not specifically earmarked for the arts and entertainment sector–yet, there is a dependence on the sector to bring back tourism in the state and specifically New York City.
- The Shuttered Venue Operators Grants (Save Our Stages) were an amazing recognition of the creative sector on the federal level. JKNY was ineligible to receive those funds.

Conclusion



John Kristiansen New York, Inc. represents many of the arts-related businesses that have been negatively impacted by the pandemic. The entire ecosystem of arts institutions, both profit and non-profit, arts-related businesses and mixed income arts workers are facing a volatile future while trying to recover from the past two years. With support, the creative sector will lead the economic recovery in this country. We are an interdependent ecosystem, and in order for the creative sector to return to the economic driver it is proven to be, all involved need assistance to fully recover from the pandemic. In the meantime, John and Brian continue to try to keep their small business afloat, so they can continue to create a brighter future for their family.

Good Afternoon Lauren,

My name is Kady Yellow and I am writing in support for CERA. I am an artist turned advocate and grant-writer given the frustrating lack of support for art in America in the 1990's albeit growing each decade. Starting in mural arts, I have been making places come alive since 2007. I grew my practice once I discovered the power of collaborating with municipal governments, community organizations, and the cultural sector to build healthy and active cities. In 2014 I put my materials downt to build economic infrastructure for others and did so by working full-time at the university in Technology and volunteering as the Creative Director at a Jungle Science Arts Labs & Gallery. Little did I know I started my career in creative placemaking.

Born and raised in Binghamton, NY—I grew up and out of adversity to later be appointed as the youngest Commissioner for Downtown Development and then co-founded the Department of Public Art. MuralFest was launched and later recognized for my work and named Mayoral Advisor to the City of Binghamton on Public Art, to help revitalize my hometown.

In 2016 I was invited to speak at the Global Mural Conference. That same year I was accepted as an artist-in-residence at the Bunnell Street Art Center in Alaska, where I proposed an unusual use of the residency: to help the town of 5,000 launch their first mural program called Peonies on Pioneer. The project was accepted and started that summer with a mission to bring attention to the flower economy in Homer, a place growing the world's best peonies, and join the team at the arts center who work tirelessly in support of the arts community. While in Alaska, I was hired by Mayor Berkowitz and Enzina Marrari, Public Curator of Public Art at the City of Anchorage, to train arts administrators and government employees on how to effectively work with artists.

After working in Alaska, "the rest of my life" made sense and so I accepted a full-ride Teaching Assistantship at the University of New Orleans in the Music Department and in 2018 graduated with a Master's in Arts Administration. After a successful six months of field-work at the Galway international art and music festival in 2017/18 in Ireland I knew I needed a position to truly impact and implement creative economies.

In 2019 I accepted to take on and lead as the first Director of Placemaking in Flint, MI and bring my focus which is the empowerment of residents to engage more meaningfully in their city planning processes by breaking down barriers and facilitating participation to integrate their creative talents into public space and alter access and occupancy (use). I grant funded almost $650,000 to support over 150 creative programs and interventions including concerts, murals, wheat paste photography projects, oral history & storytelling gatherings, poet-for-hire, street theatre, and dance performances. I am proud to be awarded the iconic Creative

Placemaking grant from the NEA and even more proud to support the CERA legislation.

I recently accepted a permanent position as the first Director of Placemaking in Jacksonville, Florida and will remain committed to building a creative economy for people-focused, active, healthy cities.

Hello Lauren,
I am a professional fine art photographer, www.winheltonharmon.com and an adjunct teacher at a small college.
Covid has wreaked havoc on my ability to make any money from my fine-art but worse
I only get $2150 - $2550 per class at the small, private college I teach at in LaPlume, PA.

Most semesters I am only slated to teach 2 classes. It's grueling, disrespectful, and humiliating to be paid so little
For such hard work with or without Covid. But, I feel very passionate about providing art instruction, and inspiration to students in these tortuous times.

All colleges/art institutions should be required to pay their art teachers a minimum of $4,000 - $6,000 a class to be able
to at least earn a living wage.

We need to support art instruction in this country to provide critical thinkers for our future,
and give students a leg up in obtaining jobs in this competitive employment environment.

If this cannot be enforced through laws then there should be some reciprocal grant fund available to working artists that
helps us live somewhat decent lives after giving so much to the world.

Please consider bringing this to the committee's attention for discussion.

Thank you very much for your attention to this.

All the best,
Winifred Helton-Harmon
320 E. Market Street
Bethlehem, PA 18018

Keystone College
1 College Green
La, Plume, PA

I write in strong support of the proposed Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA). As Executive Director of a small arts organization in the rural West, I have seen how powerfully creative projects can boost community vibrancy, economic health, tourism activity, and local well-being. Over and over again, American communities have demonstrated that the arts bring the lowest-cost, highest-impact benefit to economic, social, and mental well being.

Urban or rural, big city or small town, the arts play a powerful role in enhancing community identity, promoting new investment, boosting tourism, spurring economic vitality, and increasing neighborhood pride. It's astonishing how powerful a public art project, event, festival, or happening can be.

Economic analysis has also demonstrated that every $1 invested in the arts generates $9 of economic activity in the immediate economy. This means a $300 million investment through CERA would return an expected $900 million in direct economic benefits.

America has never needed the arts more. I'm not talking about Netflix and Spotify, but the work of local visual, performing, and design artists active in their communities creating projects that engage, inspire, and excite us as a nation.

Thank you,
--
Krys Holmes (She/Her)
Executive Director
The Myrna Loy

League
of American
Orchestras

Simon Woods, President and CEO
League of American Orchestras
February 3, 2022

"The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy"
Written Testimony to the House Committee on Small Business

The League of American Orchestras thanks the House Committee on Small Business for holding a hearing on January 19, 2022 dedicated to "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy." The creative economy is worthy of attention for its long-standing contributions to the workforce development, economic strength, and civic vitality of communities nationwide. Given the prolonged duration of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the live performing arts sector, the Committee's hearing is a particularly important opportunity to commit to federal policy action that will respond to the unique and urgent needs of America's creative sector.

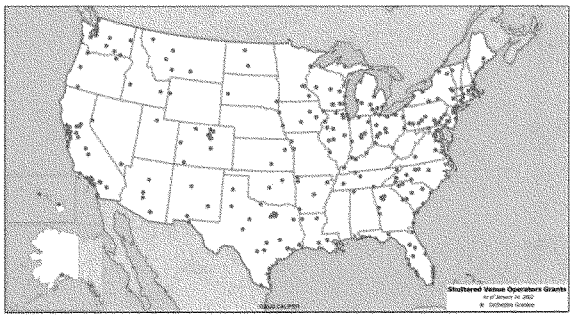
More than 1,600 orchestras partner with communities throughout the United States, and all are substantial contributors to the cultural and economic impact of the wider arts sector. Even as orchestras faced unprecedented challenges in 2020 and 2021 and are facing new uncertainties in 2022 with the surge of the Delta and Omicron variants, their resilience and creativity are evidenced in their ongoing contributions to their communities. As orchestras are innovating to provide safe live arts experiences, online performances, and learning opportunities nationwide, decisions about operations during the pandemic are closely connected to local and state public health mandates and each orchestra's individual financial situation, and very many continue to suffer significant pandemic-related revenue losses. Orchestras and the wider creative sector will be essential contributors to our nation's recovery from the pandemic and must be supported by federal policies that restore and further strengthen the arts nationwide.

Orchestra expenses totaled more than $2.1 billion in 2019. Their economic impact far exceeds that amount as orchestras create jobs, engage in commerce with local businesses, and spur local expenditures on related goods and services. Orchestras support a substantial workforce in communities across the country, engaging a large ensemble of 80 or more musicians for concerts, supported by a creative workforce of composers, administrative staff, stage technicians, ushers, and other professionals. America's adult and youth orchestras employ a dynamic team of teaching artists, community engagement professionals, and expert program staff that deliver lifelong learning through music.

As this Committee considers ongoing opportunities to support employers and small businesses, we encourage particular attention to the nonprofit arts organizations that contribute to the

creative economy alongside self-employed creative workers, sole proprietors, for-profit businesses, and small LLCs. Orchestras are 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, exist in all 50 states, serving virtually every community, with annual budgets ranging from less than $30,000 to more than $100 million. Two thirds of all orchestras have budgets under $300,000. As part of the nonprofit charitable sector, orchestras depend upon private philanthropy and civic support to fuel programs that serve community needs.

While public funding and private contributions are essential for orchestras to lower or eliminate the cost of participating in concerts, learning programs, and community partnerships, earned revenue through ticket sales and fees were, on average, 41% of revenue that supported the orchestra workforce and programmatic activity prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Like for-profit businesses, orchestras suffered severe earned revenue losses that threatened their workforces and their missions. Careful attention by this Committee to nonprofit eligibility for COVID relief such as the Shuttered Venue Operators Grants program and Paycheck Protection Program forgivable loans was essential to unlocking access to relief for orchestras and other nonprofit organizations. We urge the Committee to partner with the nonprofit sector to ensure that any future pandemic-related or long-term support for the small business sector is structured so that nonprofit organizations are assured eligibility.



We are extremely grateful for the federal support to-date that has provided business-saving assistance during such an unprecedented and prolonged public health crisis. In addition to more than $267 million in Shuttered Venue Operators grants to 337 orchestras in communities nationwide, dedicated National Endowment for the Arts funding, forgivable Paycheck Protection Program loans, Employee Retention Tax Credits, enhanced charitable giving incentives, and other forms governmental assistance have helped to see orchestras through the first wave of the pandemic, but most forms of federal relief expired at the end of 2021.

When they have not been able to perform in their usual indoor venues, orchestras have shifted to outdoor and online performances, innovated new digital content, and have found ways to bring music to communities when they cannot come to the hall. One innovative example was the South Bend Symphony's project entitled *Octet,* which provided musicians work at a time when it had become nearly non-existent for performers. Chamber music was recorded in a socially distanced hall and then mixed to be channeled through eight individual speakers set up in a circle. The fully transportable experience allowed listeners to encounter the sounds of an octet

as part an immersive, safe, audio experience. *Octet* traveled to area hospitals, libraries, schools, and other community venues, notably making rounds at several South Bend COVID vaccine clinics.

Federal support has made it possible to keep doors open, utility bills paid, and many workers have been able to remain on payroll, but the duration of the pandemic continues to strain all revenue sources and new and renewed federal assistance is needed. As infection rates fell on the retreat of the Delta variant, orchestras began to make gains in ticket sales, which gives us hope for recovery in the longer term. However, the return of audiences from week to week was uneven, and the onset of the Omicron variant has had a severe and long-reaching impact on orchestras' financial capacity and workforce.

This Committee can take the following action:

- Support the "Shuttered Venue Operators Grant" program by authorizing the Small Business Administration to grant remaining funds. Urgent action is also needed to expand the time allowed for using these grants, as supported in the Save our Stages Extension Act (S. 2889 / H.R. 5429), to meet the ongoing need for relief.
- Ensure that any new provisions related to COVID-19 relief and forgivable loans will remain available to nonprofit arts organizations of all sizes and to self-employed workers, sole proprietors, and small LLCs to support the arts workforce and communities until the arts can resume full operations.
- Provide new direct federal relief funding to support the increased and ongoing costs of COVID–19 testing, security to check IDs/vaccination records, ventilation upgrades, and other related expenses.
- Enact the provisions of the Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs to Transform the Economy (CREATE) Act (S. 3521 / H.R. 6381), to promote the local arts and creative economy nationally and support economic development.

Further Congressional action can provide both COVID-19-related and longer-term policies that support the creative sector:

- Reinstate the Employee Retention Tax Credit for the fourth quarter of 2021 (H.R. 6161) and extend its duration, modifying nonprofit eligibility beyond the current "gross receipts" test.
- Enact the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act of 2021 (S. 2872 / H.R. 4750), which would reinstate deductions for unreimbursed employee business expenses.
- Increase charitable giving by reinstating and expanding the above-the-line, universal charitable deduction tax incentive through significantly increasing the cap and extending the provision.
- Support robust funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), expand waivers for public/private matching requirements for grantees, and provide flexibility for sub-granting.

- Make permanent federal add-ons to Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) eligibility for musicians and other gig economy workers with mixed W-2 and 1099 income sources.
- Enact the bipartisan Creative Economy Revitalization Act (S. 2858 / H.R. 5019), which would establish a workforce grants program to employ artists and writers to create publicly available art.
- Enact the provisions of the Promoting Local Arts and Creative Economy Workforce (PLACE) Act, which will boost the creative economy and empower workers to find sustainable jobs in creative and cultural industries.
- Support a complete education for all students through federal policies and funding at the U.S. Department of Education that will ensure equitable access to arts education for all learners amidst the COVID-19 crisis and beyond.
- Provide state and local COVID-19 relief funds to support immediate needs of the creative sector and community partners.
- Ensure effective implementation of new broadband benefits so that all people, no matter their income or location, continue to have access to high-speed broadband and can more equitably participate in artistic, educational, and cultural activity taking place online.
- Support dedicated relief resources for nonprofit organizations and their workforce, as proposed in the WORK Now Act (S. 740 / H.R. 1987).
- Enact policies that will ensure rapid processing of the artist visas that are essential to supporting international cultural activity as performances are rescheduled.

Orchestras have contacted Committee members urging immediate action in these policy areas to strengthen support for the creative sector. The Binghamton Philharmonic Orchestra, Bloomington Symphony Orchestra (MN), the Columbia Orchestra (MD), Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and Philadelphia Youth Orchestra Music Institute are among the many orchestras nationwide partnering with the wider arts sector to underscore the need for new and renewed federal support of the creative economy.

On behalf of the 1,200 nonprofit orchestras and 400 nonprofit youth orchestras across the nation, the League of American Orchestras is incredibly grateful for the leadership from this Committee that made the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program, Paycheck Protection loans, and other forms of essential federal relief available. Federal relief provided support for orchestras' workers, operating costs, and mission-critical activity, and the need for ongoing federal assistance is urgent. Thank you for this opportunity to share ways in which this Committee and the broader federal government can increase support for the creative sector.

LEAGUE OF WISCONSIN MUNICIPALITIES

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Madison, Wisconsin 53703
phone (608) 267-2380; (800) 991-5502
fax: (608) 267-0645
league@lwm-info.org; www.lwm-info.org

February 3, 2022

Dear Honorable Representatives:

I am writing to you in my role as Executive Director of the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, a 123-year-old statewide organization which helps Wisconsin cities and villages share ideas and take action for economic, workforce, and community development. The League is concerned with economic, workforce, and civic growth in Wisconsin communities large and small. We recognize the power and value of the arts, culture, and creativity in making good places to live, work and play.

The strength of the creative sector and benefits to community members is based on investment from the public and private sectors. I urge the Committee and all legislators to recognize the *Power* of Arts & Culture as an economic driver in our nation, the *Peril* of the lack of federal support of, and the *Promise* that the creative economy offers towards revitalizing the entire American economy. In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the creative economy accounted for $919.7 billion of the American economy (five times as much as agriculture and forestry). In Wisconsin, **the economic impact in 2019 was $10.9 billion, encompassing over 96,000 full time jobs -** more jobs than in our state's beer, biotech, and papermaking industries. In addition, the Brookings Intitute's new report, ***Improving quality of life—not just business—is the best path to Midwestern rejuvenation,*** provides compelling new data that traditional economic development tools may be ineffective compared to investments in quality of life and place, especially in Wisconsin's smaller communities.

Despite its contributions to America's economic success, however, the Arts & Culture sector has failed to receive much needed support. Estimated losses to the creative industries as a whole from the COVID-19 pandemic are 2.7 million jobs and more than $150 billion in sales. As early as June of 2020, research showed that foot traffic had declined in consumer areas as much as 60%, only 7% of which could be attributed to government lockdowns. Theaters and other performing arts venues were the hardest hit of all establishments.

Wisconsin's creative sector is primed and ready to help the state recover from the pandemic. Creative sector jobs have a significant multiplier effect; in rural areas, higher creative sector employment per capita gives an even larger boost to overall employment than in urban areas. ***In short, the more creative workers you have, the more jobs you have, period.*** I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector and create a Department and Secretary of Arts & Culture to represent this vital sector of the U.S. economy. In doing so, you will demonstrate your commitment to improving the lives of all Americans, the vitality of American businesses, and the revitalization of the entire American economy.

Please call on me for information and assistance in developing this important sector. Many thanks for your support.

Sincerely,

Jerry Deschane, Executive Director
League of Wisconsin Municipalities

YOUR VOICE. YOUR WISCONSIN.

Dear Ms. Finks,

We are writing in support of CERA and the federal government's investment in the creative sector. Our theatre not only hires actors, directors, and other theatre artists, but also hires Teaching Artists to provide creative dramatics and Shakespeare classes in dozens of schools. For almost 20 years, we have also taught classes in California state prisons. We have seen the positive effects of the arts on people of all ages and backgrounds. In the prisons, participants drop out of gangs, reunite with family members, and pursue higher education. For young people, participation in the arts can be the lifeline that allows them to explore their own identity, creativity, and leadership capacity. Jobs in the arts don't typically pay a lot, but they are jobs that make people happy, and jobs that allow artists to share their passion with others, making our world a better place.

Government funding during the pandemic was vital for arts organizations; continued investment in the creative sector would strengthen our economy, and the nation's creative potential.

Thank you,

Lesley Currier

Thank you to the Secretary of Labor, the Chairperson of the National Endowment for the Arts, the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled concerning awarding National Grants For Arts and Creative Workforce Programs, I appreciate the opportunity to provide the following testimony for your consideration regarding CERA.

My name is Lexie Peveto, known as Lex Lumiere in the art world. I am a native Texan, born on Galveston Island, raised in Houston and am from a family of award winning artists. We have served as proud creative ambassadors and **Fine Art Headliners** who represent the friendly, conservative and charming **State of Texas. The Arts industry in Texas generated $5.59 billion, which resulted in nearly $350 million in tax revenue. Houston and Dallas each generated nearly $1 billion or more in arts revenue. Today, the Texas creative sector employs nearly 800,000 Texans.**

On January 15, 2022 I traveled to Washington D.C. to attend the **76th Annual Gala for the American Society Of Photographers** to accept the **ASP International Award** on behalf of my Grandfather **Frank Cricchio**, who passed the day before Christmas Eve at age 88. Frank and Bea Cricchio, my grandparents were from the small town of **Port Arthur, Texas** population 55,000. Frank was the child of hard working Italian immigrants, he got his start taking pictures in high school at **Thomas Jefferson** in 1952 taking pictures of football games, and graduations. He sharpened his skills by self studying, reading books 2 hours a day to become a **Master Photographer**; and **lighting expert, author** and **lecture** one of the original **Kodak Camera Craftsman**, limited to the **Top 40 Photographers in the World.** In 1966, the **United Press International awarded Cricchio** and **The Port Arthur News** the **ROP National Color Award. Frank Cricchio** became the only **Texan** to obtain the **Texas Lone Star Award, United Nations Award for Photographic Excellence, the Fuji Lifetime Achievement Award and to be honored by The Texas House of Representative** for **significant contributions to photography**. His expertise in the field of photography led Cricchio to becoming the **first and only photographer** to receive more than **1,000 merits from the Professional Photographers of America in 1998**. Frank, considered a lighting genius who understood mathematical algorithms was like the human version of Photoshop before it was invented. He helped **Fuji** and **Kodak** transition **traditional film into the digital imaging market** we use today. Frank Cricchio held **Presidency** in the **Texas Professional Photographers Association, Southwest Photographers Association, the Professional Photographers of America, and the American Society of Photography.**

Frank Cricchio and his body of work are in the Gulf Coast Museum in Port Arthur, Texas. Cricchio used his skills as an artist, photographer, businessman and owner of Cricchio photography studio in partnership as a **50 year member of the Rotary Club** with perfect attendance. He helped build water wells in impoverished communities throughout South America so they would have access to clean water, gave scholarships to students to support their education as well as supporting many other charities. Frank Cricchio's last project before retiring was creating the **International Avenue Of Flags** on **The Port of Port Arthur ship channel, a world class Texas waterway in close proximity to the Gulf of Mexico located on the Sabine Neches Waterway used for over a hundred years to reach global markets throughout the world and connect inland to waterways, highways, railroads and pipeline throughout North America. Being a child of immigrants, Frank wanted everyone who traveled through the waterway of his childhood home to see the flags of all the countries that had safe passage through the port to know they were welcome.** My Grandparents, Frank and my Grandmother Beatrice 'Bea' Cricchio had a deep appreciation for art and other cultures because they traveled around the world four times landing on every continent, teaching photography and lighting sponsored by **Kodak** and **Fuji** to thousands of people on how to master their craft.

In 1964 my Grandmother, **Beatrice 'Bea' Cricchio** an expert skilled in **retouching film negatives** or **painting portraits** placed in **Best of Show** for her paintings **'Jack'** and **'A Grandma's Memories.'** In 1974, at the **83rd International Exposition Of Photography** in Los Angeles, **Bea Cricchio** became the **1st minority woman; Spanish** and **Apache Indian** to be awarded the degree of **'Photographic Craftsman,'** the highest association **Honor** for the **Professional Photographers of America (PPA.)** She achieved the award not for her photography skills, but

for her painting and retouching abilities. If Bea was unable to touch up a negative she would paint the entire portrait, and it was this ability that enabled her to become an international award winning artist. On March 26,1984 at the **Southwest Convention**, Bea Cricchio was honored by the **SWPA** as a **'First Lady of the PPA,'** she received a stained glass award and another medal from the **PPA**. Also receiving award(s) for **Best Oil Portraits** from the **Photo Bema International Exhibit, Mexico City Photo Association, and Honorable Mention Ribbon from the Association of Texas Photographers Conference (ATPI.)** On October 1, 2003, Bea Cricchio would also receive the **1st place award** for her painting **'Jodi,'** via the **Port Arthur Library Exhibit** in Texas In May of 2021, Bea Criccio won the **1st place award** for her painting, **'Vance'** and **3rd** place for **'Camden'** with the **Texas Artist Museum (TAMS.) Together, for 28 years my Grandparents would work with thousands of clients, students and charities before I was even born and run a successful photography business.**

None of which would prepare my grandparents for when **Hurricane Katrina**, a destructive Category 5 Atlantic hurricane with 130mph winds that caused over 1,800 fatalities and $125 billion in damage turned their recently relocated, new photography studio into a twisted pretzel of metal remains and ruined photographs in 2005. Encouraging me to relocate to New York City to be 'Make The Cut,' while my grandparents decided to retire. My point being is that insurance or grants are not always enough to save a lifetime of hard work or sustain the long term financial security of a creative family of 12. Two children of which my Grandparents informally adopted and trained in the photography business to provide a living for them when the Bragg parents were killed in a car accident in front of their own house. In my grandparents generation, for a community to succeed, survive and thrive they had an unwavering belief in teamwork; to protect, provide and prevail together in efforts for everyone to achieve their life goals as well as maintain quality wages to provide a good standard of living in terms of food, water and shelter not only for themselves but the many people whom worked and relied on them. The fact **Bea and Frank Cricchio** were able to make a living for **28 years** of their marriage creatively is a miracle unto itself and no easy feat during their era. A grant like **Cera,** had it existed would have made it possible for artists like my grandparents to recover after hardship and possibly keep their studio open.

It would take me Lexie, as their Granddaughter, years learning classic photography in their studio dark room, under their mentorship and that of Honors Art teacher **Mrs. Terrie Robinson-Tata** a **Carnegie Hall** award recipient, more than half of my entire lifetime of work, charity auctions and art exhibits to reach a **Professional Tier 1 Art Status** at their level as an artist in 2015. My first photography award was at age eighteen which opened the door for me to represent **Cypress-Fairbanks ISD** in Houston in 1992 in a joint exhibition at **Hermes** with famous **Parisian Photographer Daniel Aaron**. Winning award ribbons from the **East Texas State University Photographic Society** and **Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo** put me on a fast track to success. In November of 1997, I would win the **Editor's Choice Award** for my photograph **'A Child Cries For Justice,'** and be published by the **The International Library of Photography** for the first time in **Treasures to Behold** (ISBN 1-57553-770-2) and a second time in **The Best Of Photos 2000** (ISBN 1-58235-805-2) in the **Library of Congress**. I relocated to NYC and supplemented my income by working for **PPR** in Human Resources reporting only to the Executive Vice President of the largest luxury apparel company in the world that employed 83,000 people. We were known for brands like **Gucci, Yves Saint Laurent, Stella McCartney, Balenciaga, Puma** and my office on the 22nd floor overlooked **Macy's** Department Store near Penn Station. During this time I would also showcase art in the last exhibit to benefit the **Japan Society, Tsunami Relief Fund** at the infamous **Chelsea Hotel in NYC** with former artists like Warhol, Robert Mapplethorpe, Willem de Kooning, Jasper Johns and Janis Joplin (also from Port Arthur) before the hotel was sold and renovated. Whether shooting the 50th Anniversary Edition of the #1 female race car driver for **BMW Mini Cooper** in their own studios or having my art displayed in the heart of **Times Square**. In 2015, I would exhibit in the **Exposure Award for the Louvre Museum** in Paris and be published for the third time in 20 years in their photography book. To representing the **State of Texas** as the **only minority female solo artist** at the **Houston Fine Art Fair** as **1** of 40 exhibitors held at the **Houston Texans** NRG Stadium across from **Chagall** and **Picasso** sponsored by the former **Hamptons Group** out of NYC. Including exhibiting art at the **Lurie Gallery** for **Bruce Lurie**, the original art dealer for **Basquiat** to benefit the **Foundation for Women's Cancer on behalf of Camille Grammer** to represent minorities at the **AIG Latino Show**.

In 2015, my life changed instantly as a passenger in a **head on car collision with a DUI driver** that totaled 3 cars including his own. During my six months of rehabilitation and recovery I began to transition my creative journey into **Therapeutic Art.** Although I am still in a 6 year lawsuit against **State Farm** to recover my 68k in medical bills and $250k in lost wages. In which my Grandfather Frank Cricchio provided a **Victim Impact Statement** to the court or his voice would not have been heard if not for M.A.D.D. During this time I returned to school to obtain a **State License** in a nursing field, a **National Certification** and training in **Integrative Medicine** via **Healing Touch,** a medically licensed program in **biofield energy therapy** specializing in **PTSD** and **Trauma** recovery. On top of teaching **Therapeutic Arts** to children at the **Star of Hope** shelter as a volunteer to help them recover from trauma introduced to their lives through: homelessness, domestic violence, abandonment, poverty, gangs, television, video games simulating war causing ptsd, etc. I was also working as a practitioner for **Healing Touch** in **Integrative Medicine** at **St. Thomas University, Carol and Odis Peavy School of Nursing.** A nationally recognized education center that is exemplary in the formation of nurses for **holistic healing** A grant like CERA, if available would have helped me as an artist recover faster financially. It was during this part of my life journey that I witnessed with complete clarity all of our families' creative roads collide into proving the power of **Art** to **Heal** lives. The business of **Healing HeARTS** was born to promote the health and well being of the entire person. I would spend the first six months of the pandemic teaching free therapeutic arts classes on Youtube hosted by the **Path of Tea** to help people deal with the PTSD and grief brought on by the extreme lifestyle changes, isolation and depression caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

On June 12, 2017, two of my artworks; a painting and a pen and ink drawing became a permanent part of the **Stonewall National Museum Exhibit, The Orlando 49. In August of 2017, Hurricane Harvey** would impact Houston as a Category 4 Hurricane and drown my home in 40 feet of water. After joining two search and rescue efforts with the **Houston Fire Department** and their volunteer team as a former **American Red Cross** child, LifeGuard. I would help lead rescue efforts in pulling innocent victims out of an apartment complex whose basement level residence was being submerged by flood water at night. The water continued to rise 6 feet at 4 am within 30 minutes. We were evacuated 5 days later due to structural, electrical and fire damage never to return and my detailed story is part of the **Houston Flood Museum** A grant like CERA would make it possible for an artist like myself affected by environmental hardship to be restored faster because there are no financial superheroes to help artists in emergency situations The process is very tedious and cumbersome to attain financial support during these times.

In 2020, I would be nominated by the **Houston Texans, NFL** football team for the **2020 Campeón de la Comunidad Award** presented by **Miller Lite,** and in the middle of a Pandemic, I would become a **Citizen Artist** for the **United States Department Of Arts & Culture (USDAC.)** Carrying on my grandparents legacy in the arts and charity through the storms of life with limited resources to still provide art for **Project Angel Food** in Los Angeles, **The Rose** which provides free breast cancer treatment, **Houston Children's Museum, UUCPA, Tiny-N-Tall Rescue** for animals, **and Mission Jade** to help combat human trafficking. Closing out the year by having three of my art pieces, dedicated to showing the intimate relationships and human faces of all my grandparents whose lives were taken by cancer, become part of the **Pfizer, 'Science Will Win,'** permanent corporate collection.

My family and I have represented the **Yellow Roses of Texas** and the **Arts** with great honor and integrity for over a hundred years combined to benefit thousands of National and International charities for people who support, empower or bless our communities. Proving it is not where you come from that matters, as much as the work ethic, heart and quality of your work to achieve a higher standard of excellence.

Texas Impact on the Arts according to an article, **'State of the Arts Report Shows Art Generated $5.59 Billion for Texas'** by Glassfire. " Texas, despite having the 11th largest economy in the world, is 41st in arts funding among all U.S. states. The arts improve student achievement, drive the economy, and benefit the state population's health and well-being The **Texas Cultural Trust's** Art Can program conducts research on the impact of arts funding in the state. It's data shows that students enrolled in arts courses attend school more regularly, have a 15% higher pass rate on standardized tests, are more likely to stay in school, graduate, and attend college. **The economic data shows the taxable revenue from the state's arts-and-culture industry has grown by 15.5% over the past decade. In 2017, the industry generated $5.59 billion, which resulted in nearly $350 million**

in tax revenue. Houston and Dallas each generated nearly $1 billion or more in arts revenue, and Austin and San Antonio each generated more than $350 million dollars. **Today, the Texas creative sector employs nearly 800,000 Texans... that's one in 15 jobs, and that number is projected to increase by 17%, or 144,000 new jobs by 2026.** We can't ignore this impact," states Heidi Marquez-Smith, the executive director of the Texas Cultural Trust. The report also emphasizes the positive effect art has on healthcare and recovery. The white paper, **"Arts, Health, and Well-Being in America," developed by the National Organization for Arts in Health**, and underwritten by the **Center for Performing Arts Medicine** at **Houston Methodist**, shows that **art in hospital settings can reduce patient anxiety, pain, length of stay, and readmissions.** In addition, there are 7,851 arts, culture, and humanities organizations in Texas. Combined, these Texan arts, culture, and humanities nonprofits employ another 24,994 people, earn more than $2 billion in revenue each year, and have assets of $9 billion.

I am an artist in support of CERA and would like to add a few details concerning the $300 million in Grants funds for creative projects across the country to help improve the Bill as well as provide a few solutions concerning the following:

- **APPLICATION (18-22): [Applications are to be accepted by Non-Profit Institutions, Workforce Programs, etc.]** In regards to Artist Applications required to be submitted to the Grant Holding Organizations, they need to be shortened for efficiency. Every organization is different, but grant applications can be incredibly lengthy and time consuming to fill out, taking 1-3 months to collect all the required information. In addition to 'attending required grant information meetings' even longer. I suggest a Universal Application, 1 form split for eligible workforce grant organizations and another form for artists to accelerate the process and save time. Any amount under $50k, IRS tax returns can quickly verify income. Creating 30 day artist application deadlines, in order to process grant applications from start to finish in 60 days.

- **TIMELINES: [(D) the proposed number of employees, 6 the program will employ, including a description, 7 of the creative workers the program will employ individuals in the labor 23 market area served by the eligible entity.]** Regarding Artist Timelines, the Grant Writing and Application Process is inefficient and too slow, it can take anywhere from 3 - 6 months to a year to receive grant approval and longer for payment. No artist's bills, studio rent or living / biz / health care expenses will wait that long for payment without going into default, debt or eviction. In order for artists to maintain financial stability, consider for example if an organization receives $500k in funding, it just sits in their coffers for months. Let them hold $200k for their overhead expenses and automatically split the rest into 12, $25k grants or 24 - $12,500 grants immediately available for artist applications and paid out in 30-60 days Due to inflation the cost of living has risen and these timelines need to be realistic, especially during a pandemic.

- **WAGES: [1 Cover the cost of wages for such individ- 2 uals; and 4 "(1) the number of grants awarded for such 5 year to eligible entities,11 "(B) the length of employment of an indi- 12 vidual who is employed by the program.]** I think this is a good short term solution for Creative workers, especially those severely impacted by the COVID pandemic. The deeper issue is a Base Artist Income and Royalties, like long term residual royalty interest payments to artists for their collaborative creative work projects to provide a financial cushion for people in hardships or trials like the pandemic. For example: If as a photographer, I shoot an image of a celebrity or model and it is used on the cover of an album, magazine or product that is available for sale. The artist; photographer, hair stylist, clothing stylist, make-up artist for that look, just like a musician, should receive a 2% automatic royalty payment for life. Royalties can last the entire life of a songwriter, 70 years after their death and result in over 100 years of royalties as the main income for the musician. There are public performance, mechanical, synchronization, digital, print, product, and public performance royalties. Which should include legislation for artists that contribute to collaborative creative projects, especially those of other artists to help provide long term financial

stability for everyone involved in our industry.

- **COPYRIGHT OWNERSHIP: [23 In accordance with 24 section 200.315 of title 2, Code of Federal Regulations, 25 and notwithstanding section 2900.13 of such title, an au-1 thor of a copyrightable work created under any program 2 funded under this section retains the right of ownership 3 under title 17, United States Code. The Federal Govern- 4 ment may— 5 "(1) obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise 6 use the work produced under this section]**

  Music royalties are payments that go to artists and songwriters for the use of their intellectual property or performative artworks like concerts. For example there are two sides of **music copyrights**. ***Master rights*** belong to the owner of the original sound recording. The owner could be the artist, record label or recording studio, *it all depends on who funded the recording.* ***Publishing rights*** belong to the owner of the actual musical composition, notes, melodies, lyrics of the song The publishing rights belong to the songwriter, unless they sign their rights to a publisher A lot of artists write their own songs and will earn royalties for both the composing and performing side **However, often musicians new to the industry are tricked or swindled out of their creative / master / publishing / streaming / rights or royalties. A solution would be legislation to automatically grant musicians or artists, beyond *Traditional Copyright law*, 75% universal financial royalties of all their creative rights. Which would allow creatives to allocate their sponsors and investors without being exploited for profiteering or greedy purposes.**

- **CARNEGIE HALL ARTIST LOFTS : Revisiting, improving, expanding Nationally upon the practical real estate concept** designed by Richard Meier, the largest artist living-and-working space in the world at the time. It included artists from all disciplines: actors, sculptors, writers, musicians, painters and dancers, photographers, and composers- who lived and worked in 170 rent controlled studios for affordable living. Enabling artists to continue to maintain their quality of life and not struggle while trying to produce more art in the midst of rising costs of living and inflation.

- **LEGISLATION LIKE THE UK "SUBJECT ARR" : ARR stands for Artist's Resale Right.** the buyer pays the ARR due on any sale. Regulation began in 2006, the government decided that the seller together with the art market professional involved (the auctioneer, for example) is liable. Artist's Resale Right gives creators of original works across their lifetime, and for 70 years after their death, the right to a payment (even to their families like a legacy trust) when their work is resold in the secondary market with the involvement of an art market professional. Providing residual income to artists throughout the lifetime of their career because we need more than temporary relief but financial stability regardless of the economy, natural disasters or pandemics. Smart business is knowing creatives are essential to the U.S. economy when our country exports art, music & film to the entire globe.

Thank you for your time, have a blessed day.

Respectfully,

Lex Lumiere
Healing HeArts
Charity Awards
2340 West Alabama
Houston, Tx. 77098
646-493-4582



1974

Ms. Criechio named photo 'craftsman'

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Beatrice Criechio, photographer with Criechio Studio, 3701 Gulfway Dr., Port Arthur, was awarded the degree of photographic craftsman by the Professional Photographers of America, Inc., PP of A.

The degree, one of the highest honors given to professional photographers, was conferred in a special ceremony here at the PP of A's 32nd International Exposition of Professional Photography.

The photographic craftsman degree is earned for exceptional service to the profession — for leadership, lecturing and service to photographic associations.

The degree entitles the holder to add the initials "CPP" after his name and to wear the blue ribbon and medallion symbolic of the award.

The PP of A is the oldest and largest association of professional photographers in the world, with headquarters in Des Plaines, Ill.

AWARDED CRAFTSMAN'S DEGREE— Beatrice Criechio left, of 3701 Gulfway Drive, receives the degree of Photographic Craftsman at the Professional Photographers Association's 32nd International Exposition of Professional Photography. Joining in the award ceremony are (center) Jerry A. Sebella, PP of A Chairman of Board, and her sponsor, Frank Criechio.

- **SNAPSHOT OF THE IMPACT OF ART ON THE ECONOMY:**

  The creative economy is essential to the U.S. economy and our country exports art, music, and film to the entire globe. In New Mexico 1 in 10 paychecks is tied to the arts

- There are 1,734 arts councils in the United States. Combined, these arts councils employ 10,546 people, earn more than $987 million in revenue each year, and have assets of $2 billion.
- There are 5,184 arts education nonprofits in the United States. Combined, these arts education nonprofits employ 28,001 people, earn more than $1 billion in revenue each year, and have assets of $4 billion.
- There are 7,780 media organizations in the United States. Combined, these media organizations employ 45,978 people, earn more than $7 billion in revenue each year, and have assets of $11 billion.
- There are 2,111 film production organizations in the United States. Combined, these film production organizations employ 9,195 people, earn more than $793 million in revenue each year, and have assets of $988 million.

- There are 886 television broadcasters in the United States. Combined, these television broadcasters employ 17,862 people, earn more than $3 billion in revenue each year, and have assets of $5 billion.
- There are 985 radio broadcasters in the United States. Combined, these radio broadcasters employ 10,795 people, earn more than $2 billion in revenue each year, and have assets of $3 billion.
- There are 2,971 visual arts nonprofits in the United States. Combined, these visual arts nonprofits employ 14,466 people, earn more than $794 million in revenue each year, and have assets of $2 billion.
- There are 8,868 museums in the United States. Combined, these museums employ 131,297 people, earn more than $12 billion in revenue each year, and have assets of $72 billion.
- There are 33,455 performing arts organizations for music and theater in the United States. Combined, these performing arts organizations employ 286,254 people, earn more than $13 billion in revenue each year, and have assets of $33 billion.
- There are 7,842 music festivals and events in the United States Combined, these music festivals and events employ 18,653 people, earn more than $2 billion in revenue each year, and have assets of $3 billion.
- There are 1,774 symphony orchestras in the United States. Combined, these symphony orchestras employ 58,564 people, earn more than $2 billion in revenue each year, and have assets of $6 billion.
- There are 1,394 performing arts centers in the United States. Combined, these performing arts centers employ 56,070 people, earn more than $4 billion in revenue each year, and have assets of $12 billion.
- There are 3,462 dance organizations in the United States. Combined, these dance organizations employ 13,092 people, earn more than $621 million in revenue each year, and have assets of $1 billion.
- There are 7,583 theaters in the United States. Combined, these theaters employ 90,466 people, earn more than $3 billion in revenue each year, and have assets of $6 billion.
- There are 1,033 arts services organizations in the United States. Combined, these arts services organizations employ 3,954 people, earn more than $311 million in revenue each year, and have assets of $1 billion.
- There are 20,231 historical societies in the United States Combined, these historical societies employ 24,697 people, earn more than $2 billion in revenue each year, and have assets of $9 billion .
- There are 369 performing arts schools in the United States. Combined, these performing arts schools employ 15,255 people, earn more than $539 million in revenue each year, and have assets of $2 billion.

8 Lex Lumiere

The StormHold Pitch

Intolerance, racism, and judgments incite division and violence. The arts connect people. Yet the arts and entertainment industries are fraught with unequal opportunities. Once, I invited an artist to exhibit in my Santa Fe Gallery. I'd seen her work online, and knew her as a parent of my former student. Angie, a dark-skinned woman, hesitated, because she didn't consider herself a real artist. The arts industry keeps women and other minorities struggling for opportunities that would foster their development of confidence and expertise, which perpetuates the problem. Angie did exhibit, and she sold many works of art.

After I closed my gallery, put everything in storage, and sheltered in place, I awoke with the vision of a haven for creatives that held an event space for 50; the radio studio of my husband, attorney and DJ, Gary Storm, and his record collection of 35,000 albums; my art studio, retreat rooms, and a gallery. Even the name was revealed: The StormHold. I scribbled in the dark on the pad next to my bed. In the morning, I shared my vision with Gary.

And so, our quest to cultivate diverse human connections through the arts and radio began.

I reached out to official arts leaders in three cities; Denver was the most responsive, encouraging, and welcoming. Consultants from the Denver Chamber of Commerce and the Denver SBDC commended our dedication to diversity, community, and education, and helped us develop an award-winning business plan. The plan highlights our rich experience in the arts and entertainment, and our mission and vision of a diverse worldwide family linked by creativity and radio.

Our plan outlines financial success with an average income of $20,000 monthly from The StormHold's various offerings, of which a percentage will be saved for reserve and escrow. Our first full time hire will be a managing team member aligned with our mission.

Our biggest challenge is finding and funding a unique building with parking and appropriate zoning. It is also our lowest risk, as it is an immediate asset. The StormHold requires about 5000 square feet. The cost for such a building is 1.5 to 2 million. We have products, furniture, equipment and several sources of revenue to partially bootstrap The StormHold, after the building is purchased.

The StormHold will practice sustainability, it will be an anchor that attracts other businesses, and a model for future StormHolds.

Linda Storm
5056605663
stormartist@gmail.com

Hello,

I hope you are well. I was told that Congress is accepting testimony on the CERA and I wanted to give you a very short account of how government funding has helped me through Covid.

I am a jazz musician based in NYC and as a representative of one of the only truly American forms of art, the lack of funding and general aid from the government towards this precious art form is disheartening. However I wanted to write to you about the aid that I was able to receive throughout Covid and how huge the impact of such a small investment on the part of the government has played for my local community but also for the promotion of the American art form abroad.
I received a grant from the Women's Fund of NYC which is a part of the New York Foundation for the Arts for a project entitled In Her Words with vocalist Vanisha Gould. *In Her Words* was ranked #20 among vocal albums of the year in the 16th Annual Jazz Critics Poll. This is the same poll that ran for 8 years via NPR. John Frederick Moore ranked our album as his top vocal album of the year!
This project alone was able to sustain 7 musicians for several months through paid rehearsals, recordings and more recently live performances. At one point in 2020 this was the ONLY work anyone had within our small community and it was truly a beacon of light in a year full of darkness. I was recently touring in Uruguay and as far as China and the audiences there were not only aware but were big fans of this project. Only through this funding was I able to produce this work on a scale that could reach abroad and play its small part in our global cultural standing as a leading nation in tradition and innovation of jazz.

I also received 2 grants from Chamber Music America which allowed me to work with the legendary Houston Person and employ a large number of artists through their most difficult times. It's important to note that very large portions of this grant are privately funded through organizations like the Doris Duke and Howard Gilman Foundations. This is not the case in most wealthy nations of the world and we should not be falling behind because our diverse population has more to say. I believe it is our government's responsibility to step up and properly fund the arts. A responsibility this great can not be left up to private funding.
I've also received funding from South Arts for a small tour which was completed in summer of 2021. These 4 grants which I received within 2 years have been instrumental in holding me through financially and emotionally within the last 2 years.

Lastly, I'd like to add that I am an immigrant who has lived in the States for about 20 years. Prior to moving here my strongest and most loving associations with America were all related to the arts. This is true for most outsiders who enjoy American music and art, especially the unique and universal artform that is jazz. This music plays such a crucial part in our representation of ourselves as a country of freedom and democracy. I urge the government to prioritize the arts and help the artistic communities of this great nation who have suffered enough from negligence.

Best,

Lucy Yeghiazaryan

Jan 14, 2022

Mallory Portnoy
69 Bond Street #2
Brooklyn, NY 11217

Hakeem S. Jeffries
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Jeffries,

I am writing to you as an actor and constituent of the 8th Congressional District of New York, regarding the historic House Small Business Committee Hearing "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy" taking place on January 19, 2021. America's Creative Economy is driven by over 5.2 million Arts & Culture Workers who generate $919.7 billion through over 675,000 businesses, in over 435 Congressional districts across this great nation. Representing 4.3% of our GDP, our work generates more household income, jobs, and tax revenue than Agriculture and Mining combined, and $300B more than Transportation. Our institutions anchor, create, and sustain highly interdependent local commercial ecosystems across the country, grounding retail, transportation, tourism, hospitality, and millions of local jobs in our orbit. In short, we are big business because we are local business. And most promisingly, we are a jobs multiplier, with a growth rate of 4.45%, nearly double that over the total U.S. economy.

The power and promise is clear. What is also clear is the peril we are now facing. With thousands of our small businesses shuttered, 2.7 million arts and culture workers unemployed, and at least $150 billion in losses (in just a three month period), we are facing an economic cataclysm locally and nationally. Therefore, I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector. These common sense initiatives include tax breaks and meaningful investment which will spur job growth and innovation, bringing local jobs to your district and increasing tax revenue.

These bills include the bipartisan **HR4750,** the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act, which would immediately give a tax break to rank-and-file arts workers who are in immediate need of economic relief, in addition to: **HR5019,** the bipartisan Creative Economy Revitalization Act; **HR6381,** the bipartisan Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act; the Arts Education for All Act; **HR1945**, the Help Independent Tracks Succeed Act; **HR7011**, the Pandemic Risk Insurance Act; **HR3054**, the 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act; **HR2380,** the Saving Transit Arts Resources Act. Additionally, I urge you to establish a congressional commission to further study the economic impact of the creative worker in America as well as the creation of a Department and Secretary of Arts and Culture to oversee investment in the Creative Economy. In doing so, you will improve the lives of all Americans today and for the century ahead.

Our fates are tied together.

Sincerely,
Mallory Portnoy

TESTIMONY FOR THE COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS

"The Power, Perils and Promise of the Creative Economy," Jan. 19, 2020

Donald T. Sanders, Executive Artistic Director, MIFA Victory Theatre
Holyoke, Massachusetts

CERA and the big picture for the creative economy's future

Honorable chairs and members of the Committee on Small Business,
I am Don Sanders, executive artistic director of the Massachusetts International Festival of the Arts (MIFA), a veteran arts producer and presenter. MIFA received generous federal Shuttered Venue Operator grants of more than $750,000, allowing us to begin recovery with optimism for the future. We are grateful for those federal funds and thank you for this opportunity to follow up on the committee's "Power, Perils and Promise of the Creative Economy" hearing of Jan. 19. I have both input on COVID-19 recovery and thoughts on a more systemic shift that would help supercharge the creative economy and support creative workers.

Sustaining our arts and culture infrastructure is important. Equally important is facilitating its expansion.

I assure you that the creative economy means business in Massachusetts where arts and cultural production accounts for $25.5 billion of the state economy, about 4.3 percent. Arts and cultural industries here provide 142,578 jobs, nearly half of the creative jobs in New England.

Of course, the past two years have greatly impacted the arts and cultural sector here in Massachusetts. My organization's programming was halted. Additionally, our best hope for filling a regional arts and culture gap and increasing our impact – the restoration and reopening of a historic 1,600-seat Broadway style theatre – was dealt a delay. We are now facing the effect of rising costs on this $50 million enterprise.

Some project background: Since its founding in 1994, MIFA has presented more than 300 of the finest examples of contemporary performing, visual and literary arts in various performance spaces in Western Massachusetts. Over this time, it became clear that to maximize MIFA's cultural, civic and economic impact, it was critical to have a permanent venue for major productions. In 2009, MIFA purchased the derelict 1920 Victory Theatre in the canal-laced city of Holyoke, a former center of silk and paper mills. Restored and reopened as a regional performing arts center, the Victory will be a critical component of the roadmap for bringing arts, culture and creativity into the center of long-term recovery throughout the Connecticut River Valley.

Legislation such as the Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA) workforce grants program will enhance MIFA Victory Theatre's ability to employ the wide range of creative workers we will need for robust and impactful launch and operation of the Victory Theatre.

Turning to the bigger picture: Now is a great time to realize how a large structure can always encourage and nourish the journey of a small one, in this case, the private journey of individual consciousness and talent that is the arts, and how then the small one encourages, nourishes and moves the structure of the big one – the story of America!

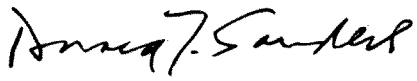
It's time to look at our dazzling and scary American industry of the arts: How it hits. How it still misses.

With the Covid slow down and recognition of the huge scale of the industry, and with the reality of such unprecedented (WPA notwithstanding) rescue and recovery programs such as PPP and SVOG, it's a great time to organize a task force to see where we're at and where we're going. Let's examine:

- what countries like France, Germany, the Netherlands and England are doing that have larger permanent arts and culture support structures, not just emergency support (for example Germany's state-supported theaters receive 70 to 80 percent of their revenues from public funds; France has a special unemployment system for creative workers that helps even out their income in sparse seasons)
- the role of state and local arts and cultural councils
- a nation-wide look-see at local performing arts groups (music, theater, dance, clubs) and museums
- what's happening in our schools with drama clubs, music and arts programs, artists/teachers that feed our world of arts, culture and entertainment

The time for a National Task Force is now. It's time to look at the Big Picture.

Sincerely,



Donald T. Sanders
Executive Artistic Director
MIFA Victory Theatre

To: Congressional Committee on Small Business
Re: Creative Economy Revitalization Act

Please accept my testimonial in strong support of the Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA).

Countless studies over many decades in numerous nations have all shown the same result: When you invest in the arts, communities thrive.

The arts industry is an employer and an economic engine. This is true not only in major cities with high tourism, but in small cities and rural communities who struggle to attract new talent to the region. When moving to a community, people want to know what leisure activities exist. Is there a museum? Orchestra? Theater? World-class arts and culture is critical and creates a sense of pride in struggling communities.

The impact of creatives goes beyond economics; there are quality of life improvements that cannot be overstated. For many children in this upstate New York community, the only access they have to attend arts and cultural events is at their museum; we do our best to make that experience accessible and inclusive with free, diverse programs. Some of these kids will never have the opportunity to go to another museum and we take the responsibility of that experience very seriously.

Look back at your own history and remember your earliest memory in a museum. Think about what you saw and how you felt. The arts are all around us. Please consider all of the benefits that the arts provide, both the tangible and intangible.

Respectfully,

Michael Grasso
Executive Director
Roberson Museum and Science Center

Submitted to the Small Business Committee of the House of Representatives for Hearing on the Creative Economy January 19, 2022.
List of signatories below
For further info contact lucy@NY4CA.org

Culture and Arts Mean Business

Cultural organizations and arts workers are small businesses and job multipliers. Whether it's a working artist operating as a 'sole proprietor' hiring dancers and stage crew for a show, or a large cultural institution employing hundreds, cultural businesses generate jobs and power local and statewide economies.

Cultural businesses are anchors for a robust economic ecosystem— in small towns and large cities. They drive street traffic to local businesses and restaurants, strengthen community, provide safe spaces and engaging activies for children and youth, safer streets through activity and foot traffic, and economic benefits to other local businesses.

The average arts and culture attendee spends money beyond ticket costs – on meals, retail, public transport, parking, lodging, local transportation, childcare, and souvenirs. These dollars provide vital income to local merchants, energize arts districts and neighborhoods, foster a healthy real estate market, and pay salaries and wages in non-arts sectors.

Pre-pandemic, New York City's creative sector directly employed over 293,000 people, paying $30.4 billion in wages, and providing tens of thousands of jobs* not just for artists and actors, but for museum administrators, sewing machine operators, sound technicians, and the myriad other jobs that make up the creative economy.

New York's tourism industry** depends on a thriving creative sector. Culture taken as a whole is the number one driver of tourism in New York State.

For the past decade New York State's creative economy has contributed more than 7% to the GSP** annually, and in 2019-21 it generated 484,000 jobs and $120 billion in economic activity– Or one in every eight dollars churning through New York's economy.*

Pandemic Effects

In the first year of the pandemic, NYS's creative sector lost 280,000 jobs and $27 billion in economic activity.*** This fall's attempted reopening meant further financial strain with reduced audience capacity and increased health and safety costs. Omicron has delivered another devastating blow to the cultural field. Theaters and museums are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on test kits, HVAC improvements, extra staff to check vaccine status, and so much more. Freelance artists and culture workers, who experienced astronomical unemployment in 2020-21, are now laid off again as shows

close and institutions retract.

A slower recovery for arts and culture will extend the length of recovery for the larger economy. The innovation of federal relief programs such as PPP and SVOG was to provide relief to the whole sector, both for profit companies and non profit organizations. This is the right way forward---provide relief to the sector and treat all cultural businesses as small business!

We ask that individual artists and non profit cultural organizations are included in small business relief, and specifically we ask for the following immediate steps to support our reeling sector:

• Support the "Shuttered Venue Operators Grant" program (Save our Stages) by authorizing the Small Business Administration to grant remaining funds, and expand the time allowed for using these grants, as supported in S.2889/ H.R. 5429, the Extension Act, to meet the ongoing need for relief.

• Some alterations to SVOG, some of which require legislative changes might include an EZ application form and process with some sort of technical assistance/guidance/support for BIPOC and smaller organizations to access support assuming that many of these didn't have capacity to apply at the beginning; provide for seasonal entities based on Q3 comparisons; lower the 70% earned revenue requirement; provide Round 3 Supplemental awards equal to 50% of initial award; increase the maximum award size; allow SVOG to pay EIDL balance.

• Reinstate the Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) for quarter four of 2021 (H.R.6161), extend the duration of the credit, and modify nonprofit eligibility beyond the current "gross receipts" test.Enact the Qualified Performing Artist Tax Deduction (H.R.4750) and the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act of 2021 (S.2872) and reinstate deductions for unreimbursed employee business expenses.

• Provide direct federal relief funding to support the increased and ongoing costs of COVID–19 testing, security to check ids/vaccination records, ventilation upgrades, and other related expenses.

• Enact the Qualified Performing Artist Tax Deduction (H.R.4750) and the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act of 2021 (S.2872) and reinstate deductions for unreimbursed employee business expenses.

Thank you for this hearing and for all your work,

New Yorkers for Culture & Arts
Dance/NYC
Carnegie Hall
Arts NYS
Bronx Arts Ensemble

Dance Theatre of Harlem
Pregones Puerto Rican Traveling Theater
Queens World Film Festival
Regina Opera Company
The Laundromat Project
National Sawdust
New York Live Arts
NYC Arts in Education Roundtable
Brooklyn Ballet
Bronx Music Heritage Center
Pace University
CARIBBEAN CULTURAL CENTER AFRICAN DIASPORA INSTITUTE
HERE Arts Center
Alison Cook-Beatty Dance
Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum
Recess Arts
Tropicalfete, Inc
Bard Graduate Center Gallery
Amy Estes, independent arts worker
Amy Larimer, Lehman College
Amy Schwartzman, Independent Cultural Worker/consultant
Full Circle Productions (FCP) Inc
Ann Chiaveirni, Freelance Dancer
On Stage At Kingsborough
Teachers & Writers Collaborative
Hyp-ACCESS
Drastic Action
People's Theatre Project
Bennyroyce Dance
Downtown Brooklyn Arts Alliance
SEVEN LOAVES DBA GOH Productions
The 52nd Street Project
Cathy Zimmerman, Independent Cultural Worker
Charlotte Cohen, Brooklyn Arts Administrator
In The Lights
Cheryl Warfield, Cheryl Warfield Enterprises/Independent Artist
ADVANCE/MORE Opera
Above and Beyond Dance
CRS (Center for Remembering & Sharing)
David King, 651 Arts
Caborca
Deirdre Rose
Dance Parade
Dance Rising

St. George Theatre Restoration
Messenger Theatre Company
Ephrat Asherie Dance
Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy
Felice Lesser Dance Theater
Pigeonwing Dance
Gregory Youdan, Individual arts supporter
Franklin Furnace Archive, Inc.
Heidi Latsky Dance
Helen Elizabeth Shaw NYU
Imala Raines, Individaul arts supporter
Welcome to Campfire
Jack Plowe, Production Manager
Jacqueline Z. Davis, Independent Arts Consultant
Roulette Intermedium
Pony Box Dance Theatre
Jazz Power Initiative
The Field
J CHEN PROJECT, Inc
Joanna Futral, Artist/Manager
The Equus Projects
Jodi Waynberg, Theater Director, Artists Alliance Inc.
National Dance Institute
Judith Calder, Individual arts supporter
Bronx Arts Ensemble
Danspace Project
Mind-Builders Creative Arts Center
Fly-by-Night Dance Theater, Inc.
Together in Dance
Katy Higgins, Individual arts supporter
Kristin Patton, Individual arts supporter
The Bushwick Starr
Brooklyn Arts Council
Lena D Lauer, Individual arts supporter
Asian American Arts Alliance
Lisa Koonce, Independent arts and non profit advisor
Union Street Dance
Mark Rossier, Arts Administrator
Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation
The Tank
Kinesis Project dance theatre
public futures cafe
Mindy Aloff, Critic, editor
Nicholas Denninger, Arts Administrator

Dancewave
Afeni Creative Studios
TheaterLab Inc
Angela's Pulse
International Arts Relations (INTARtheatre.org)
\PMT House of Dance
Petra Zanki, Choreographer
Kinding Sindaw Heritage Foundation, Inc
Repertorio Español
Louis Armstrong House Museum
The Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York
Mov!ng Culture Projects
Latiné Musical Theatre Lab
Dance Studio Alliance
BAX|Brooklyn Arts Exchange
Sarah Cecilia Bukowski, Dancer, writer, and community activist
Sharon Fallon Productions, Inc.
Art's House Schools, Inc.
LaGuardia Performing Arts Center
Sundog Theatre
Susan Vitucci, Arts worker - writer
Tal Yarden, Theater/Film/Projection Designer
Tamara Keshecki, Musician & Arts Consultant
CUE Art Foundation
Thomas Gutowski, Individual arts supporter
The Center for Fiction
Brooklyn Arts Exchange
Veronica Jiao, Dancer
Bronx Council on the Arts Inc.
Ensemble Studio Theatre
a canary torsi dance company
Yasmin Venable, Dancer
Zanib Ahmad, Individual culture supporter
ISSUE Project Room
A.I.R. GALLERY

February 2, 2022

Nicolette McDermott-Ketchum, PA-C, BS Ed
Hummingbird Memory Cafe
Farmington, NM

Representative Teresa Leger Fernandez
Representative Jay Obernolte
Senator Ben Lujan
U.S. Congress

Dear Representative Fernandez, Representative Obernolte and Senator Lujan,

Thank you for your participation in the bipartisan leadership of multiple propositions to fund a creative economy.

As a primary care physician assistant (formerly Indian Health Service) and volunteer facilitator of the Hummingbird Memory Café in Farmington, NM, I am writing to show my support of the Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA). Having funding to pay local creative workers in various settings provides opportunities for all of us to have access to the arts throughout our communities while supporting an economy that is often taken for granted when considering the health and planning of where we live.

The COVID pandemic has highlighted the longstanding inequities in our communities for many community members including our elders and people living with disabilities. Creativity has played a huge role in addressing these inequities as a general approach to problem solving during the pandemic. More specifically, the utilization of the arts themselves throughout the pandemic has provided healing and nurtured relationships in a way that other interventions have not been able to achieve.

Spaces such as memory cafes provide opportunities for people living with and impacted by dementia to gather, celebrate their humanity, make connections with others in similar situations while utilizing the arts to collectively create. An issue that the Hummingbird Memory Café has faced is that we are a grassroots organization with no current funding due to challenges in finding funders whose values align with café principles (most

notably, detragedizing the messaging around dementia), so we rely on a spirit of volunteerism from our creative workers. With CERA, organizations such as ours might be able to appropriately compensate creative workers engaging with our cafe.

Collaborating with other organizations such as the Reimagining Dementia Creative Coalition for Justice has provided opportunities to grow the influences of creative approaches for people living with and impacted by dementia.

I urge Congress to fully fund CERA. Engaging with the arts allows all of us to thrive. Opportunities would expand both for creative workers and their audiences with the passage of CERA.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for the work you are doing to support creative workers throughout our country.

Sincerely,

Nicolette McDermott-Ketchum, PA-C, BS Ed
Facilitator, Hummingbird Memory Cafe
Telephone and Text: 505-787-6322
Email: hummingbirdmemorycafe@gmail.com
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/hummingbirdmemorycafe
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/hummingbirdmemorycafe/
YouTube:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTJhje09d_Rx9ILTSLQvmhQ
Linktree: https://linktr.ee/hummingbirdmemorycafe

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The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy
Written Testimony Submitted by OPERA America
Before the U.S. House Small Business Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
February 3, 2022

OPERA America appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony before the U.S. House Small Business Committee in support of its January 19 hearing entitled *The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy*. OPERA America, its members artists and organizations, and the millions of Americans they serve appreciate that the Committee scheduled this hearing to shine a spotlight on how the COVID-19 pandemic has adversely impacted the overall arts and cultural sector, including the opera community and individual creative workers across the country. It is important for the U.S. Congress and Administration to understand the current condition of the sector and to provide support as the nation continues to deal with the pandemic and move beyond it in the near future.

It is imperative for the federal government to continue to support the arts and cultural sector during and beyond the current pandemic, including individual creative workers. Because of the current pandemic and the nature of the arts and cultural sector's engagement with the public, the sector was one of the first major industries to shutter its live venues and cancel public performances and events. The arts and cultural sector also will be one of the last industries to reopen. Indeed, the latest surge of the omicron variant forced opera companies across the country to cancel public performances during their 2021 winter seasons after they had reopened successfully earlier in the year in compliance with federal, state, and local health and safety protocols. This stop-and-start scenario is unsustainable in the short-term and will adversely impact the overall sector in the long-term, including the employment of creative workers who have lost their jobs and may have left the sector entirely for other forms of sustainable employment. Further, the many allied industries, including restaurants, hotels, and transportation that rely on the arts and cultural sector in their local communities for the purchase of goods and services are suffering.

The arts and cultural sector is an important part of the economy at all levels. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (EA) released data in March 2021 that showed the overall arts and cultural sector was expanding before the pandemic. The production of arts and cultural goods and services in the U.S. added 4.3 percent directly to the nation's GDP, for a total approaching one trillion dollars ($919.7 billion). This amount was greater than the value added from other major industries including construction and transportation. Pre-pandemic, the arts and cultural sector employed 5.2 million workers with total compensation of $447 billion, not including self-employed arts workers. Data released by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and BEA shows the major economic impact of the arts and cultural sector at the state and local levels in terms of employment and the production and sale of goods and services.

OPERA America and the opera community appreciates how the opera community and its individual workers have benefitted from the establishment and implementation of various federal pandemic relief programs, including federal unemployment relief. OPERA America conducted a national survey of its members that documents that opera companies have secured over $200 million in federal pandemic relief, including support from the Paycheck Protection Program, Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) Program, and the Employee Retention Tax Credit Program. These programs provided a lifeline of support to the opera community as it did for the overall arts and cultural sector. Because of this federal support, the opera community, in general, has been able to survive the current pandemic while operations have been suspended due to government directives.

Various opera-related companies and non-profit organizations have been able to leverage their federal pandemic relief to retain their staff and artists and provide support to their local arts communities and creative workers. **However, the overall arts and cultural sector needs continued support as our nation moves beyond the current pandemic. There can be no national recovery without continued support for the arts and cultural sector.**

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OPERA America supports **Save Our Stages Extension Act legislation – H.R. 5429**. This legislation extends through **March 11, 2023**, the timeframe during which Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) recipients may use grant funds to cover their expenses. Because of the lengthy implementation of the program by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and relentless waves of the pandemic, grantees need more time to expend their grants. **OPERA America also urges that any unallocated SVOG program funding remain with the SBA to continue to support the arts and cultural sector.** There is bi-partisan companion legislation in the U.S. Senate – S. 2889 .

OPERA America also supports the **Creative Economy Revitalization Act – H.R. 5019** – to establish a $300 million dollar program through the U.S. Department of Labor to award grants to government and nonprofit agencies to provide programs that employ individuals and provide public access to art or arts programming. This legislation would mitigate creative worker displacement, stimulate local creative workforce growth, create a pipeline for new creative jobs, enrich communities, increase access to culture. There is bi-partisan companion legislation in the U.S. Senate - S. 2858.

There are other major pieces of legislation in the U.S. House and Senate that have bi-partisan support that would provide tax relief to the arts and cultural sector, including individual creative workers. We urge the House Small Business Committee to work with the House Ways and Means Committee to pass and enact these major pieces of legislation that have bi-partisan support in both the U.S. House and Senate.

We support **Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) Reinstatement Act – H.R. 6161 –** to reinstate the employee retention tax credit for the fourth quarter of 2021. Various companies and non-profit organizations have relied on this tax relief during the pandemic and were anticipating the fourth quarter ERTC that was eliminated to pay for the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, enacted in November 2021.

We support **Universal Giving Pandemic Response and Recovery Act – H.R. 1704 –** to extend and expand the universal non-itemized charitable deduction for cash contributions. This non-itemized deduction expired on December 31, 2021, and was another way for the arts and cultural sector, including opera companies, to secure support during the pandemic. There is companion bi-partisan legislation in the U.S. Senate – S. 618.

We also support the **Performing Artist Tax Parity Act of 2021 – H.R. 4750 –** to provide tax relief to individual artists for various expenses related to their employment. There is companion bi-partisan legislation in the U.S. Senate – S. 2872.

These are just some of the pieces of legislation that will support the arts and cultural sector, increase access to the sector by local communities, and families. Thank you for the opportunity to share how the current pandemic has impacted the opera community and what needs to be accomplished by the federal government to support the arts and cultural sector, creative economy, and individual creative workers going forward. OPERA America and the opera community look forward to working with the U.S. Congress on these and other relevant issues as the nation moves forward from the pandemic.

About OPERA America – www.operaamerica.org
Founded in 1970, OPERA America's mission is to lead and serve the entire opera community, supporting the creation, presentation, and enjoyment of opera. Membership includes over 600 opera companies, educational institutions, and affiliated businesses. More than 40,000 staff members, artists, and trustees at these organizations join nearly 3,000 individual members in empowering OPERA America as the national champion for opera. OPERA America is a founding member of the Performing Arts Alliance, a coalition of national performing arts organizations to advance the interests of the non-profit sector within the performing arts industry.

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Kamala Sankaram

Testimony of Pam Breaux

President and Chief Executive Officer, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

Before the **U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Small Business Hearing on**

"The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy"

January 19, 2022

Chairwoman Velázquez, Ranking Member Leutkemeyer, members of the Small Business Committee, thank you for holding today's hearing to consider the vital role of the arts in our economy. My name is Pam Breaux and I serve as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), the organization that represents and serves the nation's 56 state and jurisdictional arts agencies.

I appreciate the Committee's attention on the key role the creative economy has had and can have in shaping the fabric of American life. The timing of this hearing is especially prudent given the unique moment in which it is taking place. Over the past two years, as the nation has struggled with the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting hardships, artists, arts organizations and venues across the country have been at the forefront of this struggle. At the height of the pandemic, 63 percent of the nation's creative workers experienced unemployment and 95 percent lost professional income. The self-employed have experienced higher levels of income loss and unemployment than other categories of cultural and creative workers. Across the country, we have seen shows canceled, museums and theaters close (some permanently), and countless individuals lose access to their livelihoods.

As a proud champion for the arts in America's communities, this has been heartbreaking to witness. I would be remiss if I didn't mention that the impacts would have been even more severe had this committee, and Congress as a whole, not responded in a bipartisan way to provide emergency relief for artists and businesses impacted by COVID-19. Legislation like the CARES Act provided a lifeline that mitigated some of the worst outcomes and put many on a pathway to recovery.

Today, while our nation has not emerged totally from the pandemic, it is prudent to examine components of our economy so that we can identify policies that will further our nation's recovery. An examination of the creative economy today sends an important signal that Congress understands and appreciates the vital role artists, arts organizations and creative businesses have on the American economy.

Last year, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Bureau of Labor Statistics released a report highlighting the significant contributions of the arts and cultural sector to the nation's gross domestic product in 2019. The study found that production of arts and cultural goods and services in the U.S. added 4.3 percent directly to the nation's GDP, for a total approaching a trillion dollars ($919.7 billion), an amount greater than the value added by such industries as construction, transportation and warehousing, mining, and agriculture. Further, arts and cultural industries employed 5.2 million workers on payroll with total compensation of $447 billion.

As these figures demonstrate, artists, arts organizations and creative businesses play a meaningful role in shaping the nation's economy. As Congress and this Committee consider next steps to further bolster the economy, I encourage all of you to continue to keep the creative economy in mind. As we have seen with targeted aid like the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant, CARES Act and

American Rescue Plan funding to the National Endowment for the Arts and to State Arts Agencies, federal support is critical for this vital industry to thrive once again.

It is also important to note that the arts and creative sector has contributed to past economic and community revitalization for local communities that have experienced chronic economic distress. Research shows that the arts can accelerate state and local economic turnarounds. An empirical analysis conducted by Dr. Douglas Noonan at Indiana University studied the role of the arts in economic recovery after the Great Recession, and the data reveals that the creative sector grew more quickly than the general economy in those years. States with diverse arts ecosystems posted bigger economic gains. All in all, the research demonstrates that the arts can improve, not merely reflect, the health of the broader economy.

Strategic and innovative solutions and investments are now needed for communities big and small, and the arts are part of the equation to advance economic recovery and revitalization. Fortifying communities across the country is critical, and the arts have a proven ability to help revitalize economies and bring distressed communities together; these can be powerful contributions in response the economic and social losses levied by the COVID-19 pandemic. Strategic investments in the arts and creative sector will allow the sector to recover, and in turn, the sector will fortify communities across the country, as it has done in response to other economic crises.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share my perspective. Moving forward please consider me, NASAA and State Arts Agencies, a resource you can turn to.

January 31, 2022
66 4th Street
New York, NY
10003

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Alexandra Ocasio-Cortes:

I am writing to you as a constituent of your district, New York's District 12, and as an Artistic Director, Founder of a culture and arts non-for-profit organization, Kinding Sindaw Heritage Foundation, Inc, and as choreographer, dancer, actress, playwright, teaching artist and arts advocate, Artists-Activist, regarding the House Small Business Committee Hearing on the Creative Economy on January 19, 2021. I urge the Committee and you to recognize the *Power* of Arts & Culture as an economic driver in our nation, the *Peril* of the Arts' lack of federal support, and the *Promise* that the Creative Economy offers towards revitalizing the entire American economy.

In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Creative Economy accounted for $919.7 billion of the American economy, (five times as much as agriculture and forestry.) I am not only an arts worker, I am a business owner of a production company, BusinessSHOW which has partnered with Cabin Kid Productions to produce the entire first season of our new webseries The Cuttin' Room Floor, in your district, bringing focus to the rich cultural tapestry that is District 10. As our endeavor grows, our commitment to NJ will only benefit the district, employing professional arts workers from the entertainment industry - and mentoring arts workers of the future - season after season.

Despite its contributions to America's economic success, however, the Arts & Culture sector has failed to receive much needed support. Estimated losses to the creative industries as a whole from the COVID-19 pandemic are 2.7 million jobs and more than $150 billion in sales. As early as June of 2020, research showed that foot traffic had declined in consumer areas as much as 60%, only 7% of which could be attributed to government lockdowns. Theaters and other performing arts venues were the hardest hit of all establishments, but our state government voted to lift the lockdown and end COVID-related unemployment benefits. BusinessSHOW and Cabin Kid were forced to move all of our offerings - which originally included community events - to virtual platforms.

But the Arts are primed and ready to help America recover from the pandemic. Arts jobs have a significant multiplier effect; in rural areas, higher Arts employment per capita gives an even larger boost to overall employment than in urban areas. In short, the more Arts workers you have, the more jobs you have, period.

I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector, and create a Department and Secretary of Arts & Culture to represent this vital sector of the U.S. economy. The Tax Parity Act, A Percent for the Arts, Creative Economy Revitalization Act, the Pro Act, the DAWN Act, and the 21st Century Federal Writers Project, will do so much to help

businesses like mine promote the sustained revitalization of our district. In doing so, you will demonstrate your commitment to improving the lives of all Americans, the vitality of American businesses, and the revitalization of the entire American economy.

Sincerely,

-Potri Ranka Manis
Founder and Artistic Director
Kinding Sindaw Melayu Heritage
Resident Artist@LaMaMa, ETC

Dear Ms. Finks,

I'm writing to you with excitement at the potential for the US Government to contribute funds to bolstering the arts. I encourage you and the committee to fund the full $15.2 billion, ring fencing a large portion of this for rural arts organizations. As I'm sure you're aware, in the 1930s the government funded theater and arts projects for artists struggling due to the Great Depression. We still see the good effects of those touring theater companies and municipal arts organizations today. We as artists are too often overlooked and, even at the best of times, the benefits of music, dance, and performing arts are often overlooked for more service and product based businesses. We as artists provide services that keep people alive, that give them hope and spaces where they find stories like their own in dark times. If there has ever been a time to revive the arts in this country, that time is now.

We need to catch up with our European counterparts in prioritizing the arts. I personally benefited from grants whilst living in Europe that helped me to record an album, tour, and create research projects. This supplemented my hourly work I did teaching voice and performance at a University. Unfortunately, since moving back to the US, my creative work has had to sit on the back burner due to taking on other jobs not in my field. This is a travesty - imagine a civil or computer engineer not being able to get work and taking up employment in a coffeeshop. The world suffers for their lack of creative and technical knowledge.

I encourage you and the committee to fund the full $15.2 billion dollar to arts and culture, prioritizing rural areas where political polarization needs to be addressed: cross community work (as seen in the Great Depression) can help to heal our country as individual artists and ortganizations reach across the aisle and enable the uplift and conversation between warring voices.

Thank you for your time.
Warmly,
Rachel Austin

Congressman Dan Crenshaw

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Crenshaw,

As a constituent of the newly redistricted District 2, and as a worker and support in the arts and culture sector, I am writing regarding the House Small Business Committee Hearing on the Creative Economy on January 19, 2021. I urge the Committee and you to recognize the Power of Arts & Culture as an economic driver in our nation, the Peril of the Arts' lack of federal support, and the Promise that the Creative Economy offers towards revitalizing the entire American economy.

In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Creative Economy accounted for $919.7 billion of the American economy, (five times as much as agriculture and forestry.) In Texas, the economic impact in 2019 was $6.1 billion, generating nearly $380 million in state sales tax, and employing more than 800,000 people - one in fifteen jobs! The industry also grew more than 30% in the last decade.

I work for a non-profit software company that serves many arts and cultural institutions across the state, country and globe and during the pandemic my role was to support and help the institutions as they went through layoffs, furloughs, cancelled performances and closing their doors for an unknown period of time. Some of the local organizations we serve include:

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston	**Houston Ballet**	**Houston Symphony**
Houston First Corporation	**Mercury Ensemble**	**Alley Theatre**
Hobby Center	**Houston Botanic Garden**	**Theatre under the Stars**
	Houston Grand Opera	**Da Camera**

I spent hours every day for months consoling passionate arts workers trying to keep these cultural institutions afloat. Performing arts were some of the first spaces to close and the last to successfully reopen due to the threat of spreading COVID-19, not just to audiences but also to the crew and artists. I spent hours everyday helping arts workers perform job functions they weren't trained to do because their counterparts were laid off. We were lucky in Houston to have support from philanthropic organizations and supporters in the community and none of our major arts and culture institutions had to close for good, but I know many are still hanging on by a thread. And I know personally many individual or freelance artists are still struggling and still unable to pursue their careers due to financial strain.

Despite its contributions to Texas' and America's economic success, however, the Arts & Culture sector has failed to receive much needed support. Estimated losses to the creative

industries as a whole from the COVID-19 pandemic are 2.7 million jobs and more than $150 billion in sales. As early as June of 2020, research showed that foot traffic had declined in consumer areas as much as 60%, only 7% of which could be attributed to government lockdowns. Theaters and other performing arts venues were the hardest hit of all establishments.

Texas's creative sector is primed and ready to help the state recover from the pandemic. Creative sector jobs have a significant multiplier effect; in rural areas, higher creative sector employment per capita gives an even larger boost to overall employment than in urban areas. ***In short, the more creative workers you have, the more jobs you have, period.***

I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector, and create a Department and Secretary of Arts & Culture to represent this vital sector of the U.S. economy including:

- **Ensure that any new provisions related to COVID-19 relief, refundable tax credits, and forgivable loans will remain available to self-employed workers, sole proprietors, small LLCs, and to nonprofit arts organizations of all sizes to support the arts workforce and communities until the arts can resume full operations.**

- **Provide direct federal relief funding to support the increased and ongoing costs of COVID–19 testing, security to check ids/vaccination records, ventilation upgrades, and other related expenses.**

In doing so, you will demonstrate your commitment to improving the lives of all Americans, the vitality of American businesses, and the revitalization of the entire American economy.

Please call on me for information and assistance in developing this important sector. Many thanks for your support.

Sincerely,
Ragan Rhodes
Solutions Manager, Tessitura Network
Ragan.rhodes@tessituranetwork.com
713-448-0514

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Written Testimony of the

Recording Academy

Before the

United States House of Representative Committee on Small Business

Hearing On

"The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy"

Submitted January 27, 2022

Chairwoman Velázquez, Ranking Member Luetkemeyer, and members of the Committee:

The Recording Academy thanks you for holding the January 19 hearing, "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy," and welcoming our testimony for inclusion into the hearing's record. As the nation's leading association for songwriters, musicians, performers, producers and engineers, we represent a significant portion of the U.S. creative economy, many of whom are also some of the nation's smallest of small businesses. The hearing shed light on many of the struggles our members face in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, but also reaffirmed the economic and cultural significance the creative economy plays in our daily lives. With an economic impact of more than $900 billion, and employing more than 5 million workers, supporting the creative economy is integral to our nation's future.

As part of the creative economy, the music industry contributes $170 billion to the U.S. GDP and supports more than two million jobs. Prior to the pandemic, the industry was poised for a bright future. Then, seemingly overnight, tours were cancelled, gigs were put on hold, and studios were closed. Our industry was decimated, and nearly two years later, we are still fighting our way back. The pandemic has touched every facet of the industry—impacting scores of artists, songwriters, producers, recording studios, venues, managers, bookers, catering teams, crews, and other small businesses.

The Recording Academy, alongside a number of organizations in the music and arts ecosystem, has worked tirelessly since March 2020 to advance legislation that aids and assists the creative worker and the creative economy. From extending and enhancing unemployment for non-traditional workers, to giving small businesses a critical infusion of cash in the form of PPP loans, to the establishment of the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program, Congress has heard the needs of the creative economy and responded in a bipartisan fashion. But, as we continue to assess the ramifications of the ongoing pandemic, it is clear that portions of the creative economy are still in need of aid. As such, the Recording Academy continues to champion policy proposals and solutions that will protect jobs, save small businesses, and spark a robust resumption of economic activity for the music ecosystem and the greater creative economy.

The following are bipartisan recommendations that will benefit music makers and music small businesses, while ensuring a strong and healthy future for the creative economy.

Recommendation: Enact the Help Independent Tracks Succeed (HITS) Act (H.R. 1945)

The HITS Act (H.R. 1945) is a bipartisan and bicameral tax proposal originally introduced in July 2020, and reintroduced March 16, 2021, that would help lift music workers, recording studios, and other small businesses out of the depths of the pandemic by incentivizing the production of new music. The HITS Act would amend §181 of the Internal Revenue Code to let independent artists deduct 100% of their production expenses for records created in the United States, up to $150,000, in the year expenses are incurred, in the same way that qualified film and television production costs are expensed. Scored at $35 million over ten years, the HITS Act is a

low-cost, but important, modification of the tax code that would create new opportunities for independent music makers to return to the studio. The carefully tailored tax deduction, capped at $150,000 per year, is targeted towards independent musicians who record at local studios across the country.

The HITS Act is non-controversial and has been marked-up out of the House Ways and Means Committee and passed on the House Floor as part of the Build Back Better Act. It is a ready-to-move and widely supported solution that will pay immediate dividends for thousands of musicians, artists, producers, studios, and other individuals and small businesses dependent on the creation of new music. The Recording Academy strongly recommends that Congress brings the HITS Act to the president's desk for enactment.

Recommendation: Targeted Relief for Small Businesses

The efforts in the 116th and 117th Congress to provide federal assistance to America's small businesses through the Paycheck Protection Program proved to be a critical lifeline for thousands of small businesses in the music industry. Additionally, the relaxation of rules regarding loans of less than $150,000 helped many music small businesses tread water for 18 months without any additional burdens. Similarly, the Recording Academy is grateful for Congress's support of the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program and the tremendous success it has had in delivering aid to live venues across the country. SVOG was the investment this nation needed to make in our live events sector.

However, despite the success of these and other SBA programs, aid did not reach all eligible entities, and many small businesses in our industry continue to struggle as the COVID-19 pandemic lingers. Whether it was confusion surrounding eligibility for "second draw" PPP loans at the start of 2021, administration issues with the SVOG program, or other challenges, certain small businesses did not receive equitable assistance. As such, the Recording Academy encourages Congress to explore ways to authorize the SBA to meet the ongoing need for relief for music small businesses who did not receive equitable aid in 2020-2021.

Recommendation: Additional Relief for Creative Workers

The CARES Act, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, and the American Rescue Plan all contained important relief programs for the creative sector. As discussed, programs like PPP and SVOG provided direct stimulus to small businesses in our industry, while the National Endowment for the Arts received supplemental funding to provide grants to many deserving arts organizations. However, these programs were all limited in how they could distribute funds, which precluded many creative workers from directly receiving aid. In the creative economy, many individual creative workers are also the smallest of small businesses—independent contractors or sole proprietors—who had less access to government assistance than businesses with multiple employees. For example, the NEA was precluded from directly granting awards to creators, and PPP loans were artificially capped by employment numbers. These types of

restrictions limited the amount of capital that flowed directly to creative workers, independent contractors, and sole proprietors.

Thus, the Recording Academy recommends that Congress evaluates additional policy solutions that could more effectively aid individual artists and creators, who are small businesses in their own right. Passage of legislation like the Creative Economy Revitalization Act (H.R. 5019) and creating special exemptions to existing NEA regulations are two immediate steps Congress could take to support individual creators. Additionally, a review of existing government programs could identify funding opportunities that could be utilized in support of the creative workforce.

Recommendation: Pass the American Music Fairness Act (H.R. 4130)

An additional step Congress can take to support the creative economy is to ensure that all creators are paid for their work. While this may sound like a simple and obvious solution, it is one that the United States does not universally abide by. Today, and for the past century, American recording artists are denied compensation when their music is played on terrestrial (AM/FM) radio. This inequity has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and has a ripple effect on small businesses throughout the music ecosystem. The bipartisan American Music Fairness Act (AMFA) (H.R. 4130), introduced in June 2021, would end this century long injustice and provide fair compensation for artists, performers, and producers in need. In turn, the added royalty stream would help lift wages throughout the industry and many small businesses would flourish. The Recording Academy urges Congress to pass the American Music Fairness Act and help America's music makers earn fair compensation for their work.

Conclusion

The Recording Academy applauds the committee's focus on the creative economy. As the witnesses testified, and as reality underscores, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact our small businesses and our workforce. The Recording Academy encourages Congress to work on ways to continue to aid and assist the creative economy. Without further Congressional action, American music and the arts will be in jeopardy. The Recording Academy stands ready to work with members of the committee on solutions.

Testimony for the Record
Robin Bronk, CEO, The Creative Coalition and
Tim Daly, President, The Creative Coalition
The Power, Peril and Promise of the Creative Economy
Committee on Small Business
U.S. House of Representatives
January 19, 2022

Acting Chair Phillips, Ranking Member Luetkemeyer, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of federal resources for the creative economy on behalf of The Creative Coalition.

Founded in 1989 by prominent members of the entertainment community, The Creative Coalition is dedicated to educating, mobilizing, and activating its members on issues of public importance, with a focus on the necessity of access to the arts for all Americans and the benefit of the arts to our society and economy.

We thank you for holding this hearing that highlights the outsized role the arts play in our economy, contributing nearly five percent of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and over three percent of the total workforce. The ongoing pandemic has been exceptionally challenging for the arts industry. Capacity levels, social-distancing restrictions, masking requirements, and changes in consumer behavior have been devastating to the sector. Early in the pandemic, shutdowns not only impacted high-profile shows and widely-attended concerts. Nearly all community theaters, local music venues, comedy clubs, and art galleries shut for an unprecedented amount of time.

We greatly appreciate the support Congress has provided via the Paycheck Protection Program and the Shuttered Venue Operators Grants, both from the United States Small Business Administration, in addition to the extra $75 million the National Endowment for the Arts received to assist arts organizations in maintaining operations. Despite these resources, the arts community remains a damaged industry in need of continued revitalization and attention to longstanding concerns the pandemic has exacerbated.

Nonprofit arts organizations typically obtain their revenue from three sources: earned income, philanthropic dollars, and public funding. Over half of most groups' funding comes from earned income in the form of tickets sales, admissions, subscriptions, gift shop sales, and ads in performance programs. Months upon months of canceled events on top of the economic downturn's impact on individual giving have taken their toll on the balance sheets of arts organizations. Larger organizations like the Kennedy Center, the Metropolitan Opera, and Lincoln Center receive significant private support and often have options to make up lost sales with pricier tickets and large donor gifts. Smaller nonprofits and local arts businesses genuinely operate at the margin with virtually no surplus at all. These organizations rely on small-dollar donations and cater to audiences and customers much more sensitive to price increases.

It is well known the pandemic's economic impacts have been devastating for small businesses of all types. What might not be as obvious is the arts have seen sharper declines in their revenue

than other sectors. A recent report by the Urban Institute[1] found that 54 percent of all nonprofit arts organizations reported losses in total revenue in 2020 compared to 36 percent of all other types of nonprofit groups. The smallest arts groups were the most likely to report the most significant decreases in earned income and donations. Many of these small arts organizations will not survive this pandemic, and without additional public support, this list will only grow as the pandemic continues.

The enormous contribution of the arts sector to our national economy is often overlooked. The value of arts and cultural production in America in 2019 was $919.7 billion, amounting to 4.3% of gross domestic product. The arts contribute more to the national economy than the construction, transportation and warehousing, travel and tourism, mining, utilities, and agriculture industries.[2] Nearly 20 percent of this amount came from self-employed workers and small businesses. Federal data shows more than 85 percent of performing arts companies and virtually all design firms employ fewer than 20 workers.[3] Independent artists and small businesses form the backbone of the arts sector and make significant contributions to our nation's social, civic, and economic well-being. They provide creative goods and services to public and private cultural institutions that are reliant on this supply chain of individual and small enterprises.

The disproportionate impact of the pandemic on small businesses in the creative economy, along with the fact that the arts sector is recovering at a slower rate than others, requires the Committee's attention. As you consider policies aimed at helping small businesses bounce back from the COVID pandemic, The Creative Coalition respectfully urges the Committee to provide substantial support targeted towards smaller arts, cultural, and creative organizations. The level of support provided by Congress should reflect the significant role the arts play in our economy and acknowledge that our economy will never fully recover from the pandemic unless there is a robust recovery in the arts sector.

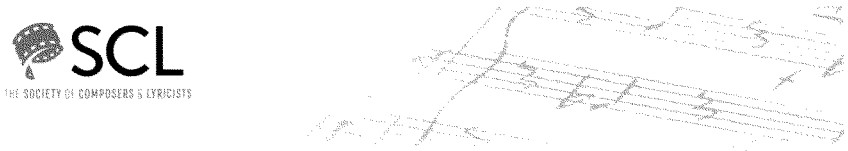
Thank you for the opportunity to provide the Committee with this testimony for the record.

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[1] Nonprofit Trends and Impacts 2021. Urban Institute. Lewis Faulk, Mirae Kim, Teresa Derrick-Mills, Elizabeth T. Boris, Laura Tomasko, Nora Hakizimana, Tianyu Chen, Minjung Kim & Layla Nath. October 7, 2021.

[2] National Endowment for the Arts, The U.S. Arts Economy in 2019: A National Summary Report, and U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, National Data for 1998-2019 (2021).

[3] Monitoring the Role of Freelancers and Small Businesses in the Arts Economy – and Early Signs of COVID-19 Impact. Sunil Iyengar and Bonnie Nichols, Office of Research & Analysis, National Endowment for the Arts. May 7, 2020.



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February 3rd, 2022

Nydia M. Velázquez, Chair
House Small Business Committee
2302 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Blaine Luetkemeyer, Ranking Member
House Small Business Committee
2230 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: The Power, Peril and Promise of the Creative Economy

Dear Chair Velázquez and Ranking Member Luetkemeyer:

The **Society of Composers & Lyricists** (SCL) is the premier US organization for music creators working in all forms of visual media, including film, television, video games, and musical theatre. It has a membership of over 2,400 professional composers and lyricists and is a founding co-member— along with Songwriters Guild of America (SGA) and other independent music creator groups -- of Music Creators North America (MCNA).

At the outset, we would like to thank the House Small Business Committee for holding the January 19th, 2022 hearing titled: The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy. We appreciate how the hearing focused on the dire impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the arts sector and creative economy, and we support the many bills that were discussed during that hearing, specifically the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant Program (SVOG), the Performing Arts Tax Parity Act, the HITS Act, the Arts Education for All Act, the Creative Economy and Revitalization Act, and the 21st Century Federal Writers Project.

Operating as independent contractors, audio-visual music creators are essentially small businesses. To "manufacture" our product, we need thousands of dollars of equipment housed in a specifically designed space, and the product we manufacture (i.e., the "Music") contains copyright, which then gets folded into yet another copyright (i.e., the "Program"). In the process, we engage musicians, music preparation staff, singers, recording engineers, software programmers and more.

As mentioned in the hearing, the creative economy generated approximately 4.3% of the United States' gross domestic product ($919.7 billion) in 2019, and prior to the pandemic employed almost 5.2 million workers (about 3.3% of the US workforce). As was also discussed in the hearing, with the onset of Covid-19 virtually all entertainment production of film, TV and live theatre was cancelled. As a result, our profession was decimated with employment falling by as much as 25%.

Thus, we stand in solidarity with our creative colleagues who testified January 19 and applaud them for raising critical issues. There is an important distinction, however, that we believe warrants further attention from Congress – and that is that unlike those distinguished witnesses – audio-visual music creators do not have the benefit of being members of labor unions or guilds. We believe our voices, and the unique issues we face, warrant consideration by Congress.

For this reason, we respectfully request a follow up hearing where creators of artistic works and source material presented by venues and performers alike, can elucidate how the imbalance of power negatively impacts independent contractors operating as small businesses within the entertainment industry.

Let me provide some background: since the 1976 ruling in which the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) deregistered the Composers & Lyricists Guild of America (CLGA), removing any right to collective bargaining, US audio-visual composers' musical creations have been deemed "Works For Hire" (WFH). This action means that as a condition of engagement, composers are forced to grant producers (the Film and Television studios) ownership of the copyrights in their works. While foregoing ownership in exchange for benefits such as collective bargaining (salary, working conditions, etc.), retirement and healthcare plans, may be typical of employee status, audio-visual composers are instead classified as Independent Contractors and therefore access none of these benefits. We lose ownership of our works and lose the right to any of the standard benefits accorded to every other crew and cast member working in the audio-visual industry.

This state of affairs is fundamentally due to the imbalance in bargaining power and the legal prohibitions denying audio-visual music creators the ability to collectively ensure better treatment and terms for our work. Creative workers are the original "gig" workers—we work on a freelance basis for a defined set of employers that provide standard contracts and low pay, with no ability to negotiate better terms. Under current antitrust laws, we are prohibited from acting together, in concert, to say "no" to certain terms, secure better remuneration, or highlight bad actors. Current labor laws treat audio-visual music creators as though we are independent businesses with the ability to negotiate with the buyers of their services. But that is far from reality. The fact is that there is no meaningful two-way bargaining. The specifics may differ, but audio-visual music creators and many other creative professionals share one thing in common: we are workers with no employee protections, no benefits, no minimum wages, no ability to collect unemployment, and yet no ability to negotiate our contracts or to collectively bargain for better terms. Many do not make minimum wage and have seen massive decreases in their pay in recent years, while more and more rights are extracted so that they cannot sell them separately.

As the US transitions to more of a "gig" economy, there is an opportunity to correct practices that continue to severely impact the livelihoods of audio-visual music creators. Accordingly, the Society of Composers & Lyricists thanks the House Small Business Committee for the opportunity to submit these comments as a follow up to the January 19th hearing on the creative economy with the hope they may serve to shine some light on the audio-visual music creators'

unenviable position of having neither traditional employee rights or benefits, nor any bargaining power.

As a sector of an industry that contributes immeasurably to the cultural and economic well-being of the US, we request that the Committee continue to seek ways to assist all of those in the US creative industries, including those of us who are not able to take unified action to address unfair wages or working conditions.

Sincerely,



Ashley Irwin
President

Dear Mrs. Lauren Finks,

My name is Sophie Peyton, I am an arts worker and resident in Minneapolis, MN and I am writing to you to give my testimony in favor and in strong support of the Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA).

I have built my career in the theater industry as a director and producer for new plays and musicals across the east coast and midwest. There are no words that fully encompass the scope of personal devastation, career damage, and financial struggle that the pandemic has laid on our community of artists. Just in my local community in the Twin Cities our theater field, both in artists and resources, have taken a hit and dwindled significantly.

You must know how severely creative workers have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. CERA will get creative workers back into jobs by creating a workforce grants program within the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Having a thriving creative and cultural ecosystem is essential to our community health, in all of our communities, especially during a period where so much healing and repair is needed for all. Over 63% of arts workers were unemployed at the height of the pandemic. But even with many resourceful artists back to work now, many are not back working in the arts industry because the U.S. has lost an estimated $15.2 billion dollars in the arts and culture sector since the start of the pandemic. Our creative and cultural workers are suffering alongside our arts institutions, and we need help now.

The creative economy is essential to the U.S. economy and our country exports and often leads the field in visual art, music, theater, and film across the entire globe. And as our nation recovers from the pandemic, CERA offers an opportunity to put Americans to work creating art that brings our communities back together.

I urgently and respectfully request that you support the Creative Economy Revitalization Act of 2021, and that you do everything in your power and control to ensure this legislation passes and that our cultural sector gets the support it needs for post-pandemic revival.

Thank you for your time,

Sophie Peyton

Written Testimony

Submitted to the Committee on Small Business, U.S. House of Representatives Regarding *The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy* Hearing (Held January 19, 2022)

Steven Kidd, Executive Director, National Humanities Alliance (February 3, 2022)

Madam Chair and Members of the Subcommittee:

Humanities organizations—including museums, libraries, historic sites, historical societies, archives, tribal organizations, literacy organizations, state and jurisdictional humanities councils, and folk and traditional heritage organizations—play an essential role in local economies. A report produced by Oxford Economics for the American Alliance of Museums demonstrated that in 2017, the museum sector alone produced more than $15.9 billion in income for more than 372,000 jobs. In 2016 the museum sector directly contributed $15.7 billion to the GDP and generated an additional $34.4 billion in indirect contributions.[1]

We urge the committee to consider the essential role that humanities organizations play in supporting local tourism economies as well as the essential infrastructure they provide local communities. Like arts organizations, humanities organizations have been battered by the pandemic and need ongoing support to bolster their local economies and serve their local communities. While the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the state and jurisdictional humanities councils distributed both CARES and ARP funding to humanities organizations, need far exceeded available funds.

SUPPORTING TOURISM ECONOMIES

Humanities organizations large and small boost local tourism in cities and towns across the United States. Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, for example, welcomes nearly 400,000 annual visitors, 93 percent of whom are from outside of Virginia. Fifty percent of them stay in a hotel for at least one night, contributing no less than $13.1 million to the local economy. These impacts are replicated in communities throughout the U.S. In Cody, Wyoming, (pop. 9,764) for example; the Buffalo Bill Center of the West serves as a major tourist attraction, welcoming 140,000 visitors per year. The National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium in Dubuque, Iowa, (pop. 58,196) contributes approximately $10.5 million per year to the local economy. And since 2014, the Historic Dyess Colony in Dyess, Arkansas, (pop. 288) which includes Johnny Cash's childhood home, has attracted visitors from every state and more than 55 foreign countries.

PROVIDING KEY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

In addition to bolstering local economies, humanities organizations throughout the United States support community infrastructure in varied ways, and this is nowhere more evident than in small and rural communities. The Seward Community Library and Museum in Seward, Alaska, (pop. 2,773), after building a new facility with support from the NEH in 2013, has increased visitation

[1] Museums as Economic Engines. A National Report; Oxford Economics for AAM

by about 60,000 visitors per year. In addition to hosting tourists, the organization provides space for nonprofits and other organizations to conduct their business. It also offers technological access and support and even passport processing to the remote Alaskan community. And the Longmont Museum in Longmont, Colorado, (pop. 94,445) provides essential event and educational space for the local community. In addition to exhibitions on area history, the museum hosts day camps, film screenings, ballet and musical performances, and music and art courses.

An NEH grant to the Greenwood Community Development Corporation in Tulsa, Oklahoma, helped the historic Black Wall Street repurpose an old storefront as a welcome center aimed at providing space for dialogue, community-driven tourism, and business development. The welcome center will ultimately host cultural programming and provide space for local artists and budding businesses that do not yet have their own store fronts.

From revitalization to preservation, humanities councils tend to the spaces and infrastructure that support and define our nation. In Chester, the oldest city in Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Humanities Council founded Chester Made, a humanities-based initiative to celebrate and promote arts and culture and harness their power as a force for community revitalization and for downtown rebuilding. Georgia Humanities' New Georgia Encyclopedia houses records of educational infrastructure built by figures like Martha Berry and Selena Sloan Butler, as well as architectural legacies in built structures and designed landscapes by Henrietta Dozier, Ellamae Ellis League, and Clermont Lee, among others.

PANDEMIC RELIEF HAS BEEN ESSENTIAL FOR THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT RECEIVE IT

During the pandemic, several small organizations were able to continue serving their communities—and employing staff—with support of NEH CARES Act funding. The Monhegan Museum in Monhegan Island, Maine, (pop. 54) is the island's primary employer and major tourism attraction. The museum benefitted from an NEH CARES grant, which funded staff salaries over a period of several months in 2020, helping families stay on the island and supporting the island community as a whole. Similarly, NEH funding to the Willa Cather Center in Red Cloud, Nebraska, (pop. 1,000) supported staff salaries and public programming during 2020, helping stabilize an organization that is key to the town's survival. The West Virginia Mine Wars Museum in Matewan, West Virginia, (pop. 474) was able to hire additional staff, expanding its capacity to serve its local audience as well as providing remote employment at a time when many were struggling.

In addition to $30 million in CARES funding, state and jurisdictional humanities councils have awarded more than $42 million in Sustaining the Humanities through the American Rescue Plan (SHARP) grants, which have allowed small organizations and rural communities to not only survive, but also flourish in a time of crisis. Five of the SHARP grants given by New York Humanities highlight local Black history. Corning Painted Post Historical Society will work with Black community leaders to create a new interpretative plan for the 225-year-old Benjamin Patterson Inn. The Center for Teen Empowerment will develop "Clarissa Uprooted:

Intergenerational History Ambassadors Exhibit" to share stories about a once-thriving African-American residential, cultural, and business community in Rochester's Third Ward.

NEED FOR FEDERAL SUPPORT HAS EXCEEDED AVAILABLE FUNDS

Through the NEH, the CARES Act provided $75 million specifically for humanities organizations. With these funds, the NEH awarded economic stabilization grants to 317 humanities organizations, supporting thousands of jobs. Additionally, with the $30 million immediately distributed to them, the NEH's partners at the state and jurisdictional humanities councils reached 4,175 organizations in the U.S. through small grants programs. NEH CARES grants offered essential support for many organizations—but they were not able to meet even the initial demand for support. The NEH was only able to fund 14 percent of the applications it received for CARES grants, while on average the state councils were only able to fund 38 percent. Additionally, while state and jurisdictional humanities councils have quickly and effectively distributed $42 million in SHARP grants, they were only able to fund 50 percent of the total requested, which was more than $84 million, underlining a significant unmet need.

Aloha Lauren Finks,

I am writing in full support of the Creative Economy bills.

The positive human and educational impact of these bills cannot be overstated. They would transform our future society, allowing access to the arts for all, a more successful educational experience to students who flourish with arts education, engender kindness to all, and have financial benefits!

Thank you for your consideration.
Taurie Kinoshita

TEXAS FOLKLIFE

February 3, 2022

The Honorable LLoyd Doggett
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Doggett:

As the Executive Director of Texas Folklife, I am writing to you as a constituent of your district, regarding the House Small Business Committee Hearing on the Creative Economy on January 19, 2021. I urge the Committee and you to recognize the *Power* of Arts & Culture as an economic driver in our nation, the *Peril* of the Arts' lack of federal support, and the *Promise* that the Creative Economy offers towards revitalizing the entire American economy.

I urge you to pass all existing legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector, and create a Department and Secretary of Arts & Culture to represent this vital sector of the U.S. economy including:

- **Ensure that any new provisions related to COVID-19 relief, refundable tax credits, and forgivable loans will remain available to self-employed workers, sole proprietors, small LLCs, and to nonprofit arts organizations of all sizes to support the arts workforce and communities until the arts can resume full operations.**

- **Provide direct federal relief funding to support the increased and ongoing costs of COVID–19 testing, security to check ids/vaccination records, ventilation upgrades, and other related expenses.**

In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Creative Economy accounted for $919.7 billion of the American economy, (five times as much as agriculture and forestry.) In Texas, the economic impact in 2019 was $6.1 billion, generating nearly $380 million in state sales tax, and employing more than 800,000 people - one in fifteen jobs! The industry also grew more than 30% in the last decade.

I'm not only an arts worker, musician, and scholar of ethnomusicology, I am also the director of a nonprofit organization responsible for the continued success of the NEA state-designated public folklife program of Texas. Texas Folklife facilitates the preservation, presentation, and celebration of the diverse cultures and living heritage of the Lone Star State. We cultivate, sponsor, and document the state's rich cultural legacy through a mix of exhibitions, performances, community residencies, apprenticeships, archival holdings, and educational programs. Our organization employs 6 staff members and contracts dozens of self-employed workers on an annual basis. In 2019, we financially supported 91 artists and enabled many more to reach 16,936 audience members statewide through over 70 distinct in-person events. In 2020-2021, despite COVID-19 induced setbacks, our achievements in safely supporting cultural workers included the direct distribution of over $42k in artist relief to folk and traditional artists.

Despite its contributions to Texas' and America's economic success, however, the Arts & Culture sector has failed to receive much needed support. Estimated losses to the creative industries as a whole from the COVID-19 pandemic are 2.7 million jobs and more than $150 billion in sales. For folk and traditional artists, practitioners and organizations, this situation is especially acute because their work is significantly dependent on social interactions. The precarity of the situation for those reliant on support from community and public events, as well as revenue from

art sales, worsened as gatherings remained closed. In addition, several factors impacted them more adversely than the artist community at large: Traditional artists are spread out throughout the state in remote areas and not necessarily clustered around urban areas, nor affiliated with supporting organizations, making them harder to reach and serve. Due to COVID-19, in March 2020 we were forced to cancel 7 live music events, permanently close our gallery exhibit space, put a freeze on the planned hiring of 2 staff positions, coordinate with our sponsored projects and artists and a host of internal and external stakeholders, all while pivoting to online mission delivery. We were hit by a significant reduction in grant funding, receiving less than half of our anticipated revenue from the City of Austin Cultural Arts Division support in 2021 due to its loss of Municipal Hotel Occupancy Tax dollars. To sustain ourselves, we had to diversify our sources of revenue including two SBA PPP loans and an EIDL loan to allow for immediate adaptation to the pandemic.

Texas's creative sector is primed and ready to help the state recover from the pandemic. Creative sector jobs have a significant multiplier effect; in rural areas, higher creative sector employment per capita gives an even larger boost to overall employment than in urban areas. ***In short, the more creative workers you have, the more jobs you have, period.***

By supporting the arts and culture sector, you will demonstrate your commitment to improving the lives of all Americans, the vitality of American businesses, and the revitalization of the entire American economy.

Please call on me for information and assistance in developing this important sector. Many thanks for your support.

Sincerely,

Charlie Lockwood
Executive Director
Texas Folklife



TEXANS FOR THE ARTS

January 31, 2022

The Honorable Roger Williams
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Williams:

I am writing to you as a constituent of your district, **Texas-25** and as the Executive Director of Texans for the Arts – the statewide arts advocacy organization – with a membership base all across the state. I have had the privilege of meeting with your staff every year since 2013, at the Americans for the Arts' national Arts Advocacy Day, when I first took this leadership position, and before the pandemic kept us from visiting in person in DC! Thank you for your service.

I am writing today about the vitally important House Small Business Committee Hearing on the Creative Economy that was held on January 19, 2021. Thank you for your service as a member of the Small Business Committee, along with Representative Beth Van Duyne (Texas-24), and to both of you for attending the hearing. It speaks volumes that you were present and engaged in the conversation. I found the proceedings to be a powerful statement about the urgency – the "peril" - we face in the arts, culture, and creative industry – yet also the hope and "promise" that the creative economy offers as the engine to revitalize the American economy.

In 2019, before COVID-19 hit, the Creative Economy accounted for $919.7 billion or 4.3% of the national economy [BEA]. It provided 5.2 million or 3.3% of all American jobs [BEA]. It contributed at least $1 billion to every single state's economy and was the 2nd highest sector for value added per dollar in the US economy after only retail. It was the 4th largest employer, after retail, construction and transportation and contributed over five times as much to the US economy as agriculture and forestry, three times as much as mining, education, or utilities.

Then came the pandemic. As Executive Director of Texans for the Arts, I am on the frontlines of hearing the stories and data that are shared across our great state – perilous stories of loss, closure, lock downs and more. Based on the creative-industry analysis, estimated losses would be of 2.7 million jobs and more than $150 billion in sales of goods and services for creative industries nationwide, representing nearly a third of all jobs in those industries and 9% of annual sales. The fine and performing arts industries would be hit hardest, suffering estimated losses of almost 1.4 million jobs and $42.5 billion in sales. These estimated losses represent 50% of all jobs in those industries and more than a quarter of all lost sales nationwide. You clearly understand that impact as a co-sponsor of SVOG – Thank you!
And while federal programs such as CARES, PPP, EIDL, NEA, SVOG, ARPA and now Infrastructure – have been a lifeline for so many individual artists, arts organizations, and arts small businesses, they have not kept up with the losses.

Texas's creative sector is primed and ready to help the state recover from the pandemic. Creative sector jobs have a significant multiplier effect; in rural areas, higher creative sector employment per capita gives an even larger boost to overall employment than in urban areas. ***In short, the more creative workers you have, the more jobs you have, period.***

I urge you to pass all outstanding congressional legislation for relief and recovery for the Arts & Culture sector, and create a Department and Secretary of Arts & Culture to represent this vital sector of the U.S. economy including:

- **Ensure that any new provisions related to COVID-19 relief, refundable tax credits, and forgivable loans will remain available to self-employed workers, sole proprietors, small LLCs, and to nonprofit arts organizations of all sizes to support the arts workforce and communities until the arts can resume full operations.**

- **Provide direct federal relief funding to support the increased and ongoing costs of COVID–19 testing, security to check ids/vaccination records, ventilation upgrades, and other related expenses.**

- **Support the CREATE, PLACE, CERA, STAR, PATPA, AEFA and the 21st C.FWP Act! This is the first time in history there have been seven arts, culture, and creativity industry legislative asks before Congress – all of which will assist America in restore economic vitality and put our workers back to work!**

Your support for these legislative asks and your commitment to ensuring that the arts, culture, and creativity industry receive much needed federal financial support, will demonstrate your commitment to improving the lives of all Americans, the vitality of American businesses, and the revitalization of the entire American economy.

Small, stop-gap measures will not undo the damage; a substantial and sustained national creative-economy recovery strategy is required. This strategy must be bottom-up, supported across the board and led by local public-private partnerships between municipal governments, arts and cultural organizations, economic development and community groups, philanthropy, and the private sector, with support from federal and state levels of government, national philanthropy, and large corporations.

Please call on me for information and assistance in developing this important sector. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Ann

Ann S. Graham
Executive Director, Texans for the Arts
www.texansforthearts.com
www.hottoolkit.com
(512) 914 8096
ann@texansforthearts.com

Dear Ms. Finks:
I want to write something encouraging any effort to bring legislative attention and resources the creative economy and art makers.

I believe the arts are essential for a decent society. If America is to reach towards its potential, or realize it's power to bring good to the world in the 21st century, it must support and sustain a creative economy throughout all sectors of the country.
As a performer, writer and arts educator, I've had to repeat this simple, to me, obvious message about the need to support the arts constantly throughout my (40 year) career. Fundraising and reporting to grant-makers often require that artists write exhaustively about 'why your art is important?'
I'm afraid I've given all the explanations I can; I've told and retold all the wonderful anecdotes; I've given example after example of how art changes lives. I think the real question is to America "What kind of country do you want?"
Thank you for your attention.
Sincerely,
Thea Martinez



Written Statement of
Theatre Communications Group
Submitted January 28, 2022
Committee on Small Business, United States House of Representatives
The Impact of the COVID 19 Pandemic on the Nonprofit Theatre Sector

Laurie Baskin
Director of Advocacy
Theatre Communications Group
520 Eighth Avenue, 24th Floor
New York, NY 10018
(212) 609-5928, lbaskin@tcg.org, www.tcg.org

Madame Chairman and distinguished members of the subcommittee, Theatre Communications Group (TCG)—the national service organization for the American theatre—is grateful for this opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of our over 500 not-for-profit member theatres across the country and the approximately 38 million audience members that the not-for-profit theatre community served, just prior to the pandemic. TCG is also a member of the Performing Arts Alliance, the Coalition of Performing Arts Advocates comprised of 18 national arts service organizations.

Ongoing federal relief to the professional, nonprofit theatre sector is essential.

The entire not-for-profit arts industry has a history of stimulating the economy, creating jobs, and attracting tourism dollars. Prior to the pandemic, the not-for-profit arts generated $166.3 billion annually in economic activity, supported 4.6 million jobs, and returned $27.5 billion in government revenue. The arts sector is an economic engine and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, this nation will need the arts and culture sector to deliver on its unique mission to uplift, engage, educate, and innovate.

Over the last two years, theatres have been shuttered, performances cancelled, staff laid off and artists are unemployed. Many theatres have worked hard to serve their communities and maintain some connection with audiences through virtual performances and education offerings. But they are operating at a drastically reduced capacity. The Paycheck Protection Program and Shuttered Venue Operators Grants have been a lifeline and kept many theatres from closing permanently. These and other federal programs have been important temporary fixes, but more assistance is desperately needed.

In response to a recent survey of professional, nonprofit theatres, 50% of surveyed theatres canceled performances due to Omicron. Many theatres have spent tens of thousands of dollars on COVID tests for employees and performers and some theatres have spent as much as several hundred thousand dollars on testing and other COVID safety protocols. In-person education programs have largely been canceled, and ticket sales remain very low, due to fear and uncertainty among audiences.

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The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been tremendous. Theatres were among the first small businesses to have to close and will be among the last to fully resume normal operations.

Here are but three stories from the professional, nonprofit theatre community:

The Commonweal Theatre Company has long been an important economic driver for Lanesboro and much of southeast Minnesota. The current pandemic has had a truly significant impact on the vitality of the theatre and of the region. In 2020 all programming was forced to take place on-line, which had a significant negative impact on the related businesses (restaurants, lodging establishments, and retail) who receive patronage from audiences. Even in 2021, when the theatre was able to reopen, attendance was only 58% of that of a normal year, due to concerns about the pandemic. Ongoing federal relief for theatres is critical to recovery.

Everyman Theatre in Baltimore, Maryland reports that as it nears the third year of trying to remain solvent for the community in this environment, its typical sources of ticket and attendance revenue are less than 20% of what they were prior to the pandemic. It will take a long time to recover, even after people begin returning to live performance at 2019 levels. The theatre and its workforce have been particularly vulnerable due to extreme, unprecedented, and sustained financial losses. It is an employer with a mission of serving the public and will be essential to recovery efforts. The theatre provides jobs in downtown Baltimore, inspires the local community, and fosters a place for the students of Baltimore to be challenged and grow into their strongest selves. It cannot continue to do this without additional support.

People's Light is a non-profit theatre company located in Chester County, Pennsylvania. It is at the nexus of rural, urban and suburban communities and serves a diverse population. Though the theatre has been able to reopen this year, its ticket income is projected to be less than half of what it was in a normal year. With Omicron surging that number may dip even lower. Recovery for performing arts institutions will take longer than in other industries as new ways to work safely are explored (usually at increased costs for testing and protective equipment) to encourage audiences to return. Further support from the government is needed to continue to operate and serve the community.

Black, Indigenous, Theatres of Color (BITOC) have had an even more difficult time managing to survive during the pandemic. TCG reviewed 305 BITOC organizations and found that 91 received funding from the Shuttered Venue Operators Grants. 52 BITOC organizations received PPP funding. We believe that many BITOC organizations did not access either program. Anecdotally, we believe that these smaller, minority-run organizations did not have the capacity to successfully apply in 2021. The programs were complicated and required a certain level of staff size, skill, and time.

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Our country's nonprofit theatres present new and classical works and serve as catalysts for economic growth. These theatres also nurture the development of the current and future generations of writers, actors, directors, and designers working in regional theatre, on Broadway, and in the film and television industries. Our theatres develop innovative educational activities and outreach programs, providing millions of young people, including "at-risk" youth, with important skills for the future by expanding their creativity and developing problem-solving, reasoning, and communication abilities—preparing today's students to become tomorrow's citizens. Theatres serve as healing forces in difficult times and produce work that reflects and celebrates the strength of our nation's diversity.

In order to maintain citizen access to the cultural, educational, and economic benefits of the arts; to advance creativity and innovation in communities across the United States; and to restore the theatre sector beyond disaster relief, and toward ongoing recovery and service to communities, **ongoing federal relief to the professional, nonprofit theatre sector is essential.**

Here are some specific recommendations/requests:

- Ensure that **any new provisions related to COVID-19 relief**, refundable tax credits, and forgivable loans will remain available to self-employed workers, sole proprietors, small LLCs, and to nonprofit arts organizations of all sizes to support the arts workforce and communities until the arts can resume full operations.

- Provide direct federal relief funding to support the increased and ongoing costs of COVID–19 testing, security to check ids/vaccination records, ventilation upgrades, and other related expenses. FEMA has such a program which provides eligibility to private nonprofit organizations – arts nonprofits across the country should have equal access to this program.

- Enact the bipartisan Creative Economy Revitalization Act (H.R. 5019), introduced by Teresa Leger Fernández (D-NM) and Jay Obernolte (R-CA)), which would help revamp the creative economy through the creation of a workforce grants program to employ artists and writers to create publicly available art.

- Support the "Shuttered Venue Operators Grant" program (Save our Stages) by authorizing the Small Business Administration to grant remaining funds, and expand the time allowed for using these grants, as supported in S.2889, the Extension Act, to meet the ongoing need for relief.

  Some additional specific SVOG recommendations include:
  - Open the application portal again for smaller organizations, and BIPOCs, that didn't have capacity to apply the first time – and this time offer technical assistance and a more streamlined application process;

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- Better respond to the needs of seasonal entities;
- Lower the % eligibility threshold to access a Supplemental Award;
- Increase the % size of Supplemental Awards, or simply offer another round of Supplemental awards;
- Allow SVOG funds to pay off Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL).

- Reinstate the Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) for quarter four of 2021 (H.R.6161), extend the duration of the credit, and modify nonprofit eligibility beyond the current "gross receipts" test.
- Enact the Qualified Performing Artist Tax Deduction (H.R.4750) and the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act of 2021 (S.2872), the Help Independent Tracks Succeed (HITS) Act (H.R. 1945/S. 752) and reinstate deductions for unreimbursed employee business expenses.
- Support the nonprofit arts infrastructure and increase charitable giving by expanding the above-the-line, universal charitable deduction tax incentive through significantly increasing the cap and extending the provision at least through 2022 (S. 618 / HR.1704 /H.R. 1081)
- Support a complete, well-rounded education for all students through federal education funding and distance learning resources that will ensure equitable access to arts education for all learners amidst the COVID-19 crisis and beyond.
- Make permanent federal add-ons to Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) and equitable unemployment compensation for gig workers, "Mixed Earners," and other non-traditional workers.
- Enact policies that will ensure rapid processing of the artist visas and consular appointments that are essential to supporting international cultural activity.

Thank you for all of the support and assistance that has been provided to sustain the theatre and arts sector through the pandemic thus far. Your attention to the recommendations in this written testimony is deeply appreciated.

Ongoing federal relief to the professional, nonprofit theatre sector is essential.

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WEST BALTIMORE RE-IMAGINING AND REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT[1]

August 6-8, 2021 stakeholder study visit and retreat to Lafayette College and the Lehigh Valley



Community Leaders from West Baltimore traveled to Lafayette College in Easton, PA, the weekend of August 6-8, to retreat and discuss the accomplishments, challenges, and next steps of the West Baltimore Reimagining and Redevelopment collaborative project with Lafayette College's Economic Empowerment and Global Learning Project. The collaboration was summer-long and focused on knowledge-making about the most meaningfully and sustainable ways to transform residents' and community aspirations into realized outcomes through own-agency, business and social entrepreneurship and enterprise development, individual and community enlightened self-interest, and complementary facilitation by public sector, private sector, and civil society actors and institutions. The retreat also discussed ways to bridge the project into the second phase of its three-year lifespan.

Stakeholders used the visit to tour places that have been successfully reimagined, transformed and redeveloped, including Bethlehem Steel into SteelStacks and Musikfest, which are now major culture and economic drivers for the region's economy, and the Neston Heights community, which has been transformed from its unenviable Delaware Terrace history as a place with the stigma of being a crime-ridden drug zone. Particular focus was given to the critical role played by the Boys and Girls Club of Easton in transforming Delaware Terrace into the healthy, vibrant, community-friendly, and resilient Neston Heights community.

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1 THE WEST BALTIMORE REIMAGINING AND REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT IS GRATEFUL TO THE GLADSTONE WHITMAN'49 ENDOWMENT FUNDS AT LAFAYETTE COLLEGE FOR ITS MAJOR SPONSORSHIP IN THE INITIATIVE. THE FUND SUPPORTS STUDENT LEARNING ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THRIFT, AND THE ABILITY OF MARKETS, FREE AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISE, ENTREPRENEURIAL FREEDOM, AND LIBERTARIAN RIGHTS, TO CREATE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC WEALTH, FOSTER ECONOMIC INNOVATION, GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, EXPAND HUMAN FREEDOMS, STRENGTHEN HUMAN SECURITY, AND ADDRESS MAJOR SOCIETAL CHALLENGES. THE PROJECT ALSO APPRECIATES THE MEANINGFUL FINANCIAL SUPPORT IT HAS RECEIVED FROM THE MARQUIS SOCIETY AT LAFAYETTE COLLEGE.

"Speaking to Margaret Powell, she spoke with colorful narratives, and innate details; but once she said, "*Where else? Everything is here*" it made me realize that all of the individuals we spoke to have never thought exit, the "*what if I get out of here?*" questions had never crossed their minds. The fact that they spoke to us is a demonstration of true loyalty."

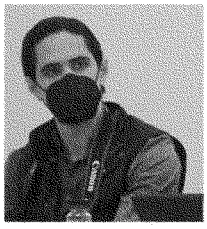
—Erika Nally







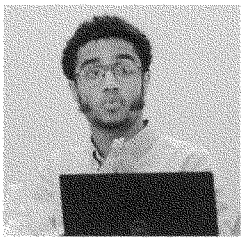




Presentations *by* Whitman Fellows





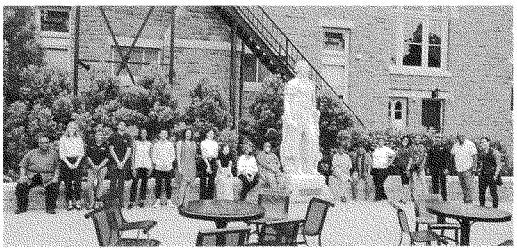


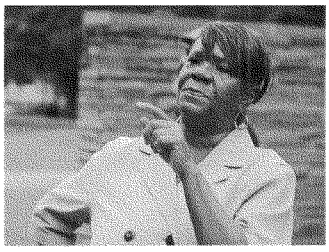




"I can say that the six days I spent in West Baltimore was the most impactful and immersive experience of my life. It made me see just how vital the narrative of the insiders are in understanding a place and why that must never be downplayed or belittled, for those stories are the backbone of place identity."

—QueSton Bell

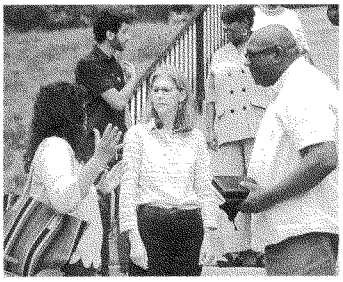


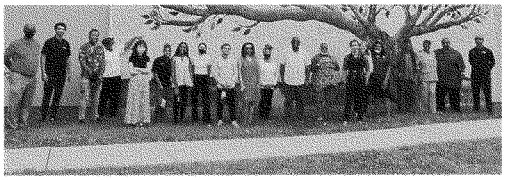


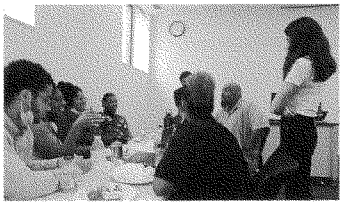


"Service is the price you pay for the space you *occupy*. If you are not helping someone, you are behind on your rent."

—Cameron Kilies







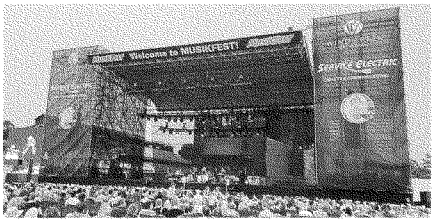


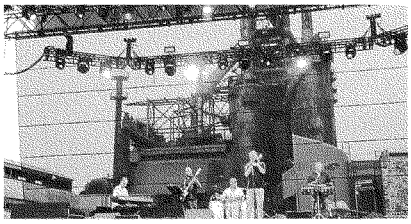
"They say "*a picture is worth a thousand words*", and I say a place is worth even more. Experiencing those places made me have a much deeper realization of the situation that each [person] is in."

—Khalid Almotaery



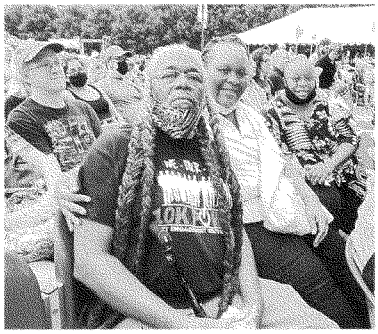
Enjoying SteelStacks, Musikfest and Preservation Jazz Band of New Orleans in the re-imagined and repurposed grounds of Bethlehem Steel





"In this moment in time, with Covid and all of the other political moments that we're in, we want to know how we can use ourselves to be more centered in our space and creating our economy. That's how we're looking at it," *said Denise Johnson*. "We're getting ideas. We're going to have more conversations. We're going to keep imagining and putting in resources," *added Ms. Johnson*.

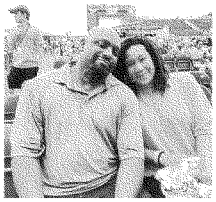












"This is the best example of what can be done with reimagining a community bridging the old, the arts, and the new. That's community. That is responsible, sustainable economic development," *said Marion Blackwell*.

WESTAF

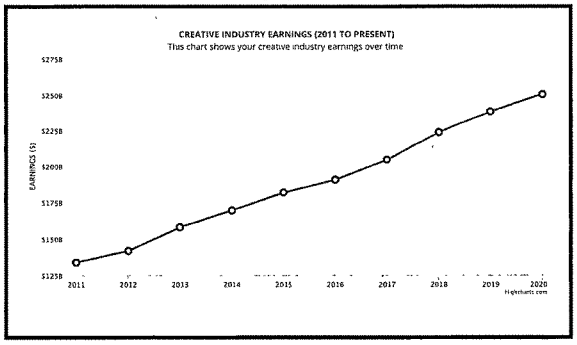
Outside Witness Testimony
Submitted by WESTAF and the Western Arts Advocacy Network
Prepared for the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Small Business
February 3, 2022

Dear Chair Velázquez, Ranking Member Luetkemeyer, Vice Chair Mfume, and Members of the Committee on Small Business:

The Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF) and the Western Arts Advocacy Network (WAAN) respectfully submit this outside witness testimony in response to the January 19, 2022 hearing entitled "The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy." WESTAF and the WAAN write to affirm the integral role the creative economy plays in small businesses and communities throughout the western United States and **urge this Committee, Congress, and the Administration to continue providing increased COVID-19 relief and recovery support efforts for the creative economy in order to enable innovation and job creation.**

Since the onset of the pandemic, the creative economy, particularly the arts and cultural sector, has faced tremendous challenges due to the essential in-person nature of much of the sector's work. **In 2020, there were 284,000 less creative jobs across the nation than in 2019** (CV Suite, 2022). The humanity of the industry is precisely what makes it so innovative and irreplaceable. Besides social benefit, the creative economy is an economic engine that will undoubtedly play an important role in the nation's economic recovery. **Based on 2019 data, the arts and culture sector represents 4.3 percent of the nation's gross domestic product at $919.7 billion, and the sector trades at a surplus of more than $33 billion annually** (Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2019). **The nonprofit arts industry alone supports 5.2 million jobs in the arts and related industries.** In the West, jobs in creative occupations, creative industries earnings, and cultural nonprofit revenues were all on an upward growth trajectory prior to the pandemic according to WESTAF's Creative Vitality Suite data.

Creative industries earnings growth in the West, 2011-2020



Source Creative Vitality Suite, 2022

WESTAF

With more than 675,000 small businesses generating $878 billion annually (Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2019), **impacting every congressional district and local community, our creative industries offer the best path to help revive the U.S. economy.** Creative businesses are job multipliers, creating employment at almost twice the national rate. The creative economy supports more U.S. jobs than the legal or public safety sectors and generates more in household income and tax revenue than agriculture and mining combined. Investment in the creative economy offers a strong return on investment over the short and long term as we pursue recovery and long-term strategies to create the conditions for a resilient economy. **As such, WESTAF and WAAN are grateful for this committee's support for the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant** which has provided much needed relief for creative small businesses that have been hard-hit by COVID-19.

We strongly recommend this committee continue to support efforts to reopen small businesses and the creative economy to enable innovation and job creation through the following short- and medium-term measures:

- **Support the Save Our Stages Extension Act (introduced in the Senate) to extend the timeline for using Small Business Administration (SBA) Shuttered Venue Operators Grants to the spring of 2023** which will allow recipients to use funds to cover expenses incurred in the on-going pandemic.
- **Expand SBA and EDA loan programs and integrate creative work into support programs with the Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy Act (CREATE Act).**
- Incentivize private businesses and local, state, and tribal government agencies to integrate creative workers to envision successful business structures in recovery and beyond.
- Prioritize and incentivize public and private sector support, access to capital, and equitable funding of arts-producing organizations, small creative businesses, community cultural centers, and collectives.

In addition to the commendable actions already taken by this committee, **Congress has the opportunity to integrate arts, culture and the creative economy into our national recovery and revitalization efforts.** There is currently more federal creative economy legislation under consideration than ever before in U.S. history. If passed, or adapted into other legislation, these policies would provide significant opportunity for creative workers and businesses, create positive economic and social ripple effects in American communities, and support a healthier, fuller, and more financially sustainable cultural life for all.

We also urge members to support the following creative economy legislation that is currently being considered in Congress:

- Promoting Local Arts and Creative Economy Workforce Act **(PLACE Act)** referred to the Committee on Finance.
- 21st Century Federal Writers Project Act **(21CFWP)** referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.
- Creative Economy Revitalization Act **(CERA)** referred to the Committee on Education and Labor
- Performing Arts Tax Parity Act **(PATPA)** referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means
- Saving Transit Arts Resources Act **(STAR Act)** referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.
- Arts Education for All Act **(AEFA)** referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor.

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WESTAF

Never in U.S. history have there been seven bills introduced in Congress to address and improve the creative economy and the lives of the creative workforce. **Together, these bills offer a new vision to supercharge the creative economic powerhouse and ensure a full, vibrant creative life for all Americans.**

The Committee on Small Business has played an important role in supporting and providing sorely needed relief to creative entrepreneurs across the Western region and the nation. **The creative economy is a vital industry in our nation that in the West alone grew by 78% between 2011 and 2019** (Creative Vitality Suite, 2021). Prioritizing creative businesses is a key part of the country's economic recovery strategy. Helping the creative economy to get back on track will reap rewards for the region and the nation as a whole. **Through public policy, we can collectively achieve a stronger creative sector, which would drive economic growth, social cohesion, and ensure a better creative life for all.**

Sincerely,

Tamara Alvarado
Chair

Christian Gaines
Executive Director

David Holland
Deputy Director

Western Arts Advocacy Network

Julie Baker, *Co-Chair*
Executive Director
California Arts Advocates
Californians for the Arts

Manny Cawaling, *Co-Chair*
Executive Director
Inspire Washington

Norm Campbell
President
Alaska Arts & Culture
Foundation

Patrick McWhorter
Executive Director
Arizona Citizens for the Arts

Christin Crampton Day
Executive Director
Colorado Business Committee
for the Arts

Benjamin Brown
Chair
Alaska State Council on the Arts

Paul Stahl
Chair
Montana Cultural Advocacy

Tia Flores
Chair
Cultural Alliance Nevada

Jim Patterson
Chair
Creative New Mexico

Sue Hildick
Executive Director
Cultural Advocacy Coalition
of Oregon

Crystal Young
Executive Director
Utah Cultural Alliance

Wendy Bredehoft
Chair
Wyoming Arts Alliance

About WESTAF and WAAN:
Through innovative programming, advocacy, research, technology, and grantmaking, WESTAF encourages the creative advancement and preservation of the arts in the West, serving the states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawai'i, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. WAAN brings together leaders from state arts advocacy organizations and other key advocates from across the West to network, share best practices, and inform WESTAF's support of arts advocacy.

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Dear Lauren,

Wise Fool New Mexico (WFNM) is a nationally recognized social circus nonprofit organization established in 2000 by a collective of queer womXn exploring puppetry and circus arts. We operate in Santa Fe, New Mexico, under the mission "to ignite the imagination, build community, and promote social justice through performances and hands-on experiences in the arts of circus, puppetry, and theatre."

We are a Social Circus organization with equitable access regardless of age, gender, ability, body size, or income, and intentionally we service the LGBTQ+, disabled, and disadvantaged communities alike. Our primary goal is to engage youth in circus arts, expose them to social justice issues, and serve a diverse community by offering access to transformative circus arts performances.

Passionate testimony from a teen, Angelo, "I especially liked hanging upside down, and the obstacle course on stilts. I felt like an American Ninja Warrior!"

The pandemic impacted our community and us very hard. To this day, we have not recovered all our programming. We are a small 501c3 nonprofit organization with a budget under $500,000 and today employ just 20 staff members and coaches, who pronominally work part-time. We are 50% smaller than we used to be in 2019, but we are still here and passionate to offer educational programs and awe-inspiring performances, thanks to all the CARES funding.

We are thrilled that you are all working on the Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA) bill, which will help all organizations in the creative economies to provide jobs to artists, innovative youth education programs, and support our local communities. Most importantly, we are all working to bring a smile to everyone's face.

