

# Arts Action News

THE NEWSLETTER OF AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS ACTION FUND

Vol. II 2008

## Presidential Candidates Speak Out for the Arts

Americans for the Arts Action Fund's **ArtsVote2008** has successfully put the arts and arts education on the agenda for the 2008 campaign. According to a recent *Los Angeles Times* article, "The arts have attained a higher profile than usual" this campaign season. The article credits the Arts Action Fund with helping the arts establish "a foothold in the campaign landscape."

WHYY public radio in Philadelphia also reported on the impact of **ArtsVote2008** in the weeks before the Pennsylvania presidential primary, referring to Americans for the Arts as the organization that "has led the coordinated effort to raise the specter of the arts in the presidential candidates' platforms." You can listen to this podcast by visiting [blog.artsusa.org](http://blog.artsusa.org) and searching for "Pennsylvania primary."

During Arts Advocacy Day on April 1, musician John Legend joined Arts Action Fund board members for a series of meetings with campaign officials from the remaining three presidential campaigns. The meetings produced positive actions from the candidates:

- Sen. Barack Obama spoke out publicly on arts policy the very day after our meeting with

his domestic policy strategist, Heather Higginbottom. Obama said that the arts, "are not just extras—they are part of a well-rounded education," and added, "We have to improve arts and music funding, in schools and outside of schools."

*Democratic presidential nominee Sen. Barack Obama admiring student artwork at the Mapleton Expeditionary School for the Arts in Thornton, CO, where he outlined his education plan on May 28.*

- Sen. Hillary Clinton's Domestic Policy Director Catherine Brown publicly specified Clinton's support for a funding increase to \$200 million for the National Endowment for the Arts.

- David Crane, a senior education advisor to the John McCain 2008 campaign, committed to addressing arts education issues in the national McCain education plan.

You can learn more about **ArtsVote2008**, read our 10-Point Arts Platform, and find out more about the candidates' arts policies at [www.ArtsVote.org](http://www.ArtsVote.org).



Photo courtesy of the Mapleton Expeditionary School for the Arts.

## Congressional Hearing Draws Crowds in Support of the Arts

For the second consecutive year, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations in charge of federal arts funding Norm Dicks (D-WA) issued an exclusive invitation to Americans for the Arts to assemble a national panel of witnesses to highlight the contributions and societal benefits the arts provide for our country. We convened a diverse panel of artists, business leaders, and

public officials to testify before Congress about the importance of federal arts funding. The hearing drew standing room-only crowds, prompting the opening of a second conference room for televising the arts hearing.



*Grammy Award-winning musician John Legend testifies during Arts Advocacy Day on the theme of how the arts fuel creativity and power innovation.*

## Message from the President

Congratulations! You and Americans for the Arts Action Fund made our presence known like never before at this year's Arts Advocacy Day on April 1. With our largest attendance ever and strong participation from congressional leaders, the event was a resounding success. You'll see what I mean as you browse some of the statistics I've included in this issue.

As advocates met with members of Congress and their staff, our message was clear: we're counting on your support for funding for the National Endowment for the Arts and arts education! We've already seen positive results. On June 11, the House allocated a major funding increase for the arts and humanities. Our attention now moves to the Senate.

You can count on the Arts Action Fund to keep you up-to-date on arts policy and legislation. For details on key issues, your representatives' voting records, and more, read our Congressional Arts Handbook at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/get\\_involved/advocacy/aad/handbook/2008.asp](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/get_involved/advocacy/aad/handbook/2008.asp).

Whether you were able to attend Arts Advocacy Day or not, you are a part of our successful efforts. Thank you, as always, for your support, which allows Americans for the Arts Action Fund to speak up for the arts on your behalf.



Americans for the Arts Action Fund President and CEO Robert L. Lynch strategizes with Robert Redford in advance of their testimony before the House Subcommittee on Appropriations on Arts Advocacy Day 2008.

### Arts Advocacy Day 2008 Highlights

- 458 arts advocates participated, representing 46 of the 50 states.
- Advocates met with more than 275 members of Congress.
- More than 5,570 of our online activists sent e-mails urging members of Congress to support a funding increase for the National Endowment for the Arts and to support funding of \$53 million for Arts in Education programs.
- 435 House and 100 Senate members of Congress received our 2008 Congressional Arts Handbook.

### Congressional Hearing, continued from p.1

Americans for the Arts witnesses included actors Robert Redford and Kerry Washington, musician John Legend, Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann, and CEO of The Conference Board Jonathan Spector. Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert L. Lynch led first with testimony and moderated the panel. For links to the hearing and transcripts of testimony, visit [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/get\\_involved\\_AADhearing](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/get_involved_AADhearing).



The national panel of arts witnesses, organized by Americans for the Arts, testified before the House Subcommittee on Appropriations on Arts Advocacy Day 2008. L-R: CEO of The Conference Board Jonathan Spector, musician John Legend, Americans for the Arts Action Fund President and CEO Robert L. Lynch, Rep. Ben Chandler (D-KY), actress Kerry Washington, actor and director Robert Redford, Rep. Norm Dicks (D-WA), and Rep. Todd Tiahrt (R-KS).

## In the News

### The Washington Post

#### Washington Post

In a February 5, 2008, *Washington Post* article on President Bush's proposed FY 2009 budget, Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert L. Lynch expressed disappointment in proposed cuts for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). "President Bush has proposed a senseless \$16.3 million cut," said Lynch. "After three years of incremental funding growth, we are sorry to see an attempt at this progress erased."

#### The New York Times

On February 6, 2008, a *New York Times* article outlined proposed cuts to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the NEA in President Bush's FY 2009 budget. The article specifically highlighted Americans for the Arts' request to Congress to restore the NEA to its 1992 funding level of \$176 million.

#### Associated Press

The Associated Press (AP) ran several articles about Arts Advocacy Day (April 1, 2008) highlighting testimony by actor Robert Redford, musician John Legend, and actress Kerry Washington in support of increased funding for the NEA. Many newspapers picked up the AP story, resulting in positive coverage across the country.



# Shaping Federal Arts Policy

The Arts Action Fund monitors arts policy at the federal level and helps bring citizens' voices to the table when important arts issues are debated. For detailed legislative updates, please visit [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/LegislativeNews](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/LegislativeNews).

## Improving the Visa Process for Foreign Guest Artists

The Arts Require Timely Service (ARTS) Act, H.R. 1312, was passed on Arts Advocacy Day by a unanimous voice vote in the House of Representatives. The bill would increase the number of visas given to foreign guest artists and organizations for performances in the United States and expedite visa processing. The U.S. Senate has yet to consider the legislation. Americans for the Arts has trained advocates to lobby on this issue for the last two years.

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) at the House Leadership Arts Luncheon hosted by Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) on Arts Advocacy Day 2008.



policies. The luncheon was attended by Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and

## Arts Luncheon Draws Key Congressional Leaders

Americans for the Arts and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) hosted a luncheon on Arts Advocacy Day for congressional leaders where they discussed the arts and how Congress could better support cultural initiatives and arts-friendly

Majority Whip James Clyburn (D-SC), along with Interior Subcommittee Chairman Norm Dicks (D-WA), Appropriations Committee Chairman David Obey (D-WI), Rep. John Lewis (D-GA), and a dozen other congressional leaders—all of whom committed to advancing funding for the arts and arts education.

## Sen. Patrick Leahy Receives Award for Congressional Arts Leadership

Arts Advocacy Day 2008 began with a Congressional Arts Breakfast organized by Americans for the Arts and the Congressional Arts Caucus. In conjunction with The U.S. Conference of Mayors, we presented Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT) with the 2008 National Award for Congressional Arts Leadership. Congressional speakers at the breakfast included Reps. Louise Slaughter (D-NY), Betty McCollum (D-MN), Ralph Regula (R-OH), Chris Shays (R-CT), and John Lewis (D-GA).



After receiving the 2008 National Award for Congressional Arts Leadership, Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT) joined a delegation of arts leaders from his home state of Vermont. L-R: Jenny Pelletier, Cornelia Carey, Sen. Patrick Leahy, Alexander Aldrich, and Diane Scloraro.

## Supporting Arts Advocacy in States and Cities

### Spiral Jetty Sculpture Protected from Oil Drilling in Utah

Robert Smithson's iconic earthwork Spiral Jetty was in danger from proposed exploratory drilling in Utah's Great Salt Lake earlier this year. Americans for the Arts, the Dia Foundation, and arts advocates worldwide responded with more than 3,100 e-mails and letters and more than 300 phone calls during the public comment period for the drilling application. And our efforts paid off! A buffer zone has now been created and conversations with Utah state officials for long-term preservation of the sculpture are underway.

### Arts Leaders Fight Cuts in State and Local Arts Budgets

The arts are often the first to be threatened when economic times get tough. State arts budgets across the country are starting to feel the impact of these difficult economic times. In Florida, arts leaders were forced to mobilize quickly to prevent an effort to zero out funding for the Division of Cultural Affairs.

A view of Spiral Jetty as seen from Rozel Point in Utah.



The Florida Cultural Alliance used data from our Arts & Economic Prosperity III report on the role of arts in fueling local and state economies to help make their case. While the final state budget included an almost 50 percent cut, advocates on the ground prevented the program from being eliminated.

In addition, Ohio Governor Ted Strickland ordered more than \$700 million in state budget cuts, which has resulted in a 10 percent reduction for the budget of the Ohio Arts Council. In Arizona, advocates are fighting off attempts to redirect the state's cultural trust to fill abandoned mines.



1000 VERMONT AVENUE, NW  
SIXTH FLOOR  
WASHINGTON, DC 20005  
WWW.ARTSACTIONFUND.ORG

## Your Quarterly Arts Action Fund Newsletter

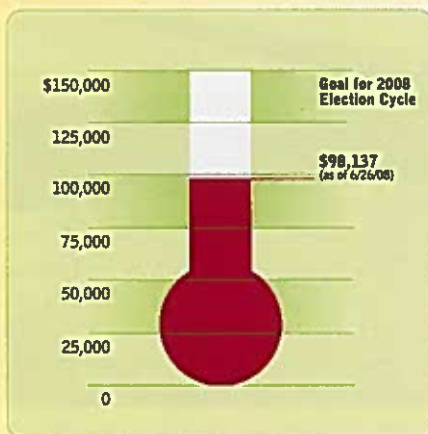
### In this Issue:

- Page 1**  
Presidential Candidates on Record for the Arts  
Standing Room-Only at Congressional Arts Hearing Featuring Robert Redford
- Page 2**  
Arts Advocacy Day Has Biggest Turnout Ever
- Page 3**  
Arts Advocates Save Utah's Spiral Jetty  
State Arts Programs Face Budget Cuts
- Page 4**  
Musician John Legend Helps Raise Money for Arts Action Fund PAC

## PAC Update



Thanks to generous supporters like you, Americans for the Arts Action Fund PAC has raised \$98,137 for our ArtsVote2008 initiative to support arts-friendly candidates in the 2008 election season!



ArtsVote2008 Campaign Fundraising Goal

At the Americans for the Arts Action Fund PAC reception and fundraiser held March 31, 2008, musician John Legend urged attendees to keep making the arts a prominent issue in the 2008 campaign. More than 100 people attended, donating a total of \$8,555 to Arts Action Fund PAC.

### Upcoming Events

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

#### August 26, 2008

3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m.  
Arts Action Fund Panel and Reception:  
The Future of the Arts and Arts Education  
Democratic Party Convention  
Denver, CO

#### September 2, 2008

3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m.  
Arts Action Fund Panel and Reception:  
The Future of the Arts and Arts Education  
Republican Party Convention  
Minneapolis–St. Paul, MN

#### October 6, 2008

National Arts Awards  
Arts Action Fund Fundraiser  
New York City

#### November 11, 2008

5:30 p.m.–6:15 p.m.  
Arts Action Fund Reception and Fundraiser  
National Arts Marketing Project Conference  
Houston, TX

Americans for the Arts Action Fund is the political advocacy arm of Americans for the Arts. We engage citizens in ensuring that all Americans have the opportunity to appreciate, value, and participate in the arts. Arts Action Fund members are citizen activists who are committed to helping make certain that arts-friendly public policies are adopted at every level of government and in the private sector. Arts Action News is delivered four times a year to supporters of the Arts Action Fund. Executive Director, Nina Ozlu Tunceli. [www.ArtsActionFund.org](http://www.ArtsActionFund.org).