

Arts Action News

THE NEWSLETTER OF
AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS ACTION FUND

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Anticipating Trump's First 100 Days in Office

President-elect Donald Trump has promised time and again to "Make America Great Again." But will the Trump Administration be great for the arts?

In October, the Trump campaign released a document entitled "Donald Trump's Contract with the American Voter" which outlines a slate of policies the President-elect intends to pursue in his first 100 days in office. Many of the listed initiatives address issues that were prominent in the Trump campaign, such as trade, immigration, and energy policy. Others could, if implemented, affect arts and cultural policy as well.

For example, Trump suggests "a hiring freeze on all federal employees to reduce the federal workforce through attrition (exempting military, public safety, and public health)." If enacted, this policy would inhibit federal cultural agencies such as the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the Smithsonian Institution.

The "Contract" also proposes a "School Choice and Education Opportunity Act" which "redirects education dollars to give parents the right to send their kid to the public, private, charter, magnet, religious or home school of their choice." While this is a very broad policy prescription, it could imply that federal dollars currently available for K-12 arts education programs – made available by the 2015 passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) – would be eliminated.

In an interview with *The Washington Post* in March, Trump said he would defer to Congress with respect to NEA funding. This could bode ill for arts advocates since House leaders previously passed nonbinding resolutions that have called for the elimination of all cultural agencies, including the National Endowment for the Arts.

The new Administration and Congress will pass their biggest legislative changes in the first 7 to 9 months of the New Year. That's why the Arts



President-elect Trump meets with President Obama at the White House. A Trump Administration could pursue policies in its first 100 days that affect the arts, including a hiring freeze on federal workers and re-direction of federal funds used for arts education programs.

Action Fund has developed a petition to President-elect Trump to support pro-arts policies within his Administration. Show your support by going to www.ArtsActionFund.org/TrumpPetition and signing your name.

It is more important than ever for grassroots advocates to stand together to fight for the arts at all levels of government.

New Congress: More Conservative, More Powerful

Arts and STEAM Caucus Leadership Intact

The new Congress taking office in January will have smaller Republican majorities in both the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate, but Republicans remain in control in both chambers and will set the agenda and chair all committees. This consolidation of power is expected to further unify the Republican party, diminishing

previous intra-party feuds that contributed to gridlock. Further, because the majorities are smaller, the more conservative Freedom Caucus members are also anticipated to leverage more power in shaping policy to come, including tax reform and budget work—both of which may affect the arts. Congress is also expected to take a more prominent role in setting the policy agenda.

The co-chairs of the long-standing Congressional Arts Caucus and the Congressional STEAM Caucus all were re-elected and will continue to provide key leadership. We look forward to newly elected members joining these caucuses, along with putting in place new leadership for the Senate Cultural Caucus after the retirement of Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), when the next session of Congress begins in 2017.

Message from President & CEO Robert Lynch

It's been a long and divisive election. Half the country is feeling discouraged and disempowered. With so much change coming so quickly, the most effective thing that we can do to reclaim our vision and our power is to get our grassroots field organized. Let's use this holiday season to regroup, refocus, and recommit our goals to protect and expand the arts and arts education in the coming New Year. Now is the time to implement strategies that will turn our hopes into action. We already know considerably about the returning incumbents' records on the arts as a result of the 2016 Congressional Arts Report Card that the Arts Action Fund released just ahead of the election. This one-stop guide allowed our members to make informed decisions at the ballot box.

We are so grateful to Blick Art Materials (owner of Blick and Utrecht stores nationwide) for partnering with us for the last three years during National Arts & Humanities Month in October. Blick recruited more than 36,000 new members to the Arts Action Fund movement. We look forward to partnering with Blick and other retail art stores in the future.

As we close out 2016, I want to urge all Arts Action Fund members to contribute to our Year-End Appeal to raise \$30,000 by December 31. We will use these funds to help us continue our grassroots efforts in 2017 as we prepare for the new administration. We'll be mobilizing our grassroots constituents to weigh in on the most important legislative



Americans for the Arts Action Fund President and CEO Robert L. Lynch with Blick Art Materials CEO Robert Buchbaum. Buchbaum received the 2016 BCA10 Leadership Award for his support of the Arts Action Fund and for helping to recruit over 36,000 new members.

agendas impacting the arts and arts education in our nation's capital and in state and local legislatures across the country. We need your support to build our political clout to reach a million Arts Action Fund members and to raise \$250,000 this election cycle to support as many pro-arts congressional candidates as possible. Please return the enclosed envelope to make your Year-End gift to support our 2017 efforts.

ArtsVote: A Voice for the Arts in the 2016 Election Campaign



2015

Mar. 24

More than 550 advocates from 48 states came to Washington, DC on March 23-24 for this year's Arts Advocacy Day. **ArtsVote2016** officially kicks off.

Jul. 15

The Arts Action Fund hosts its first ArtsVote New Hampshire Advocacy Training at the Currier Museum to train over 50 arts advocates on the ground in New Hampshire.

July

The Arts Action Fund releases background arts memos for all Presidential candidates and were updated as news developed. Memos were available to members on **ArtsActionFund.org** website.

Aug. 14

With over 150 arts advocates in attendance, the Iowa Arts Advocacy Caucus was a resounding success. From Twitter to *The Des Moines Register*, the media took notice of the impact we made on advancing the role of the arts and arts education in the 2016 election.

Sep. 14

Arts Action Fund member Kate Huffman of Iowa captures Hillary Clinton's position on the arts on video. She had learned key advocacy tools at this summer's Iowa Arts Advocacy Caucus.

Sep. 30

Last year, arts advocacy went viral on YouTube. Nowhere was this clearer than when Bernie Sanders sent a customized video directed to Arts Action Fund members in which he spoke passionately about his longstanding support for public art, local arts agencies, and arts education.

Dec. 10

Through the Arts Action Fund PAC, our members also contributed to the re-election of Congressional arts champions, like Rep. Suzanne Bonamici of Oregon. Congresswoman Bonamici added an amendment that will now integrate the arts into K through 12th grade STEM education (science, technology, engineering and math).

Supporting Arts Advocacy in States and Cities

State Elections

There were almost 6,000 state elections this year with 12 governors and legislators in 44 states up for election. When the votes were all counted, the general trend was that of a “Republican Status Quo.”



This map, provided by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) shows total party control (Governor, Senate and House). After the elections, there will only be 17 states with divided government, the lowest since 1944

Ballot Initiatives

Pro-arts results came in from a number of ballot initiatives at the state- and local-level. For instance, in Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson Counties in Colorado, a ballot initiative—Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD)—dedicates one-tenth of a 1 percent sales and use tax to cultural facilities throughout the seven-county Denver, Colorado metropolitan area. Voters overwhelmingly supported extending this through 2030, which currently generates about \$55 million a year. The SCFD was first authorized in 1988 and has since been reauthorized twice in 1994 and 2004, respectively. It is local efforts like these that can make real impact in communities all across America. Several arts education funding referendums were also overwhelmingly

passed last night by voters in Pinellas County, Florida and Tucson/Pima County, Arizona.

A unique coalition of arts and culture organizations and nonprofits supporting homeless families formed to promote a San Francisco ballot initiative, Proposition S. The measure did not seek to increase the tax rate but to reallocate the city’s Hotel Tax funds. For families, Prop. S meant \$18 million dollars in stabilized funding from the hotel tax towards rapid re-housing, eviction defense services and other programs. For the arts and culture, it meant receiving 17% of the total hotel tax by year 2020 that increase funding for local arts and cultural organizations. However, Proposition S did not pass since it received 62.93% of the vote—just shy of the 67% needed.

2016

Mar. 7–8

April

July

Jul. 20

Jul. 26

Sep. 15

Nov. 8

Nov. 21

On Monday, March 7, the Arts Action Fund hosted a PAC Fundraising Reception with nine-time Grammy-nominated artist Ledisi, in conjunction with Arts Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill. Ledisi encouraged advocating for arts education in particular; she mentioned during her speech that a teacher inspiring her to pursue music changed her life.

The Arts Action Fund releases a list of 10 detailed arts policy questions to ask the candidates. You can view them at ArtsActionFund.org.

The Hill publishes an Arts Action Fund ad during the Republican and Democratic National Conventions.

ARTSSPEAK@RNC, a national policy forum on the transformative power of the arts. See more at ArtsActionFund.org/RNC2016.

The Arts Action Fund presents ARTSSPEAK@DNC at the Philadelphia Museum of Art during the Democratic National Convention. Panelists and performers included Ben Vereen and Ben Folds. See more at ArtsActionFund.org/DNC2016.

The Arts Action Fund releases the 2016 Congressional Arts Report Card, a one-stop guide to help you make informed decisions at the ballot box.

On November 8th, America elected Donald Trump to the presidency, despite earning 2 million fewer votes than Hillary Clinton. The Senate and House remain GOP-controlled.

Americans for the Arts and the Arts Action Fund presents a post-election impact on the arts webinar. View the webinar here: <http://bit.ly/zhXfwek>



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PAC Update



In September, the Arts Action Fund released the 2016 Congressional Arts Report Card to inform arts advocates of the arts voting records of their members of Congress running for re-election.

Check out the 2016 Congressional Arts Report Card and see if your congressional delegates received a “Thumbs Up” at www.ArtsActionFund.org/pages/Congressional-Report-Card.

In the 2016 election cycle, of the candidates the Arts Action Fund PAC was able to support, over 81% won their re-election. We congratulate the following candidates whom we supported and won::

Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)
Rep. Ami Bera (D-CA)
Rep. Ken Calvert (R-CA)
Sen. Kamala Harris (D-CA)
Rep. Ted Lieu (D-CA)
Rep. Linda Sanchez (D-CA)
Rep. Mimi Walters (R-CA)
Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL)
Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL)

Rep. John Lewis (D-GA)
Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA)
Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID)
Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D-IL)
Rep. Seth Moulton (D-MA)
Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD)
Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)
Rep. Sandy Levin (D-MI)
Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN)

Rep. Billy Long (R-MO)
Sen. Maggie Hassan (D-NH)
Rep. Leonard Lance (R-NJ)
Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV)
Rep. Jacky Rosen (D-NV)
Rep. Joseph Crowley (D-NY)
Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY)
Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY)
Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY)

Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY)
Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-NY)
Rep. Paul Tonko (D-NY)
Rep. Pat Tiberi (R-OH)
Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR)
Rep. David Cicilline (D-RI)
Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA)
Rep. Dave Reichert (R-WA)

Americans for the Arts Action Fund is the 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.



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