

Arts Action News

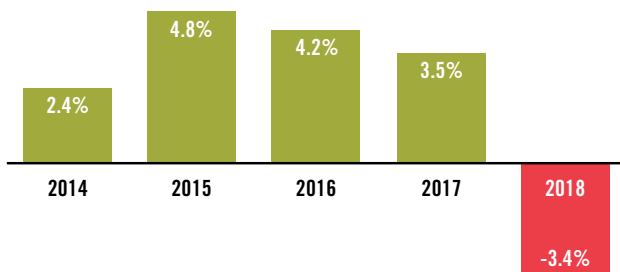


The Quarterly Newsletter of the Americans for the Arts Action Fund
Volume IV, 2019

ArtsActionFund.org

Did the 2018 Tax Law Changes Discourage Charitable Giving?

Annual Change in Charitable Giving by Individuals: 2014-2018



Charitable giving by individuals dropped in 2018 for the first time in five years—the very first tax year following passage of the Tax Cut & Jobs Act of 2017.

At a time when the U.S. economy is growing at a healthy rate, charitable giving by individuals dropped by an inflation-adjusted 3.4 percent in 2018.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) that went into effect in 2018 has triggered a series of alarms across the country on the future of charitable giving. By reducing specific incentives to make tax-deductible charitable contributions, many taxpayers are no longer motivated to give as much as they used to, if at all.

This decline in charitable giving negatively impacts nonprofits because donations are the backbone of this sector. Unfortunately, the beneficiaries of these programs suffer the most, particularly families and individuals, who depend on community-based nonprofit organizations. That means fewer meals served, fewer individuals housed, fewer arts education opportunities, and fewer services provided by charities across the country.

The Arts Action Fund is a proud member of the Charitable Giving Coalition, which has brought thousands of major nonprofit organizations together, from the Red Cross and the United Way to religious charities. Together, we have voiced concerns about alarming trends in charitable giving. First, fewer Americans are making charitable contributions. Second, far fewer Americans can itemize their tax returns, which means they are no longer being rewarded with a tax deduction for charitable gifts. The coalition actively lobbies Congress to reinstate tax deduction incentives for every taxpayer to give to charity.

Maine Arts & Culture Support the Economy and its Veterans

THE ARTS HELP SUPPORT MAINE'S ECONOMY AND VETERANS

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and Creative Industries Business & Employment in the Arts report, Maine's Arts and Culture Sector accounts for:

- \$1.5 BILLION INDUSTRY**
- 2.6% OF THE STATE'S ECONOMY**
- 16,618 ARTS JOBS**

MAINE IS HOME TO 2,307 ARTS ORGANIZATIONS!

COMMUNITY-BASED ARTS ORGANIZATIONS SERVE MEMBERS ACROSS THE STATE INCLUDING VETERANS, ACTIVE MILITARY, AND THEIR FAMILIES. SUPPORT COMES FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR THE VETERANS, THE MAINE ARTS COUNCIL, THE MAINE ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS, THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS, AND MANY MORE.

SPECIAL THANKS TO MAINE'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION INCLUDING SENATOR COLLEEN COLEMAN, AS THE CO-CHAIR OF THE SENATE CULTURAL CAUCUS, CONGRESSWOMAN SHELLEY FRANKS AS THE CO-CHAIR OF THE HOUSE CONGRESSIONAL ARTS CAUCUS, AND VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS ACROSS THE STATE FOR THEIR VITAL ARTS SUPPORT!

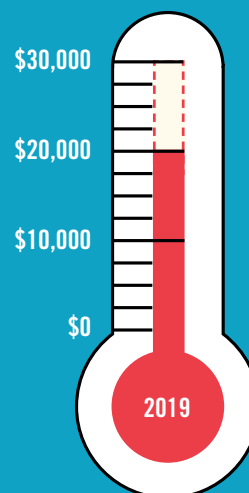
RECORDED MESSAGE

In honor of Veterans Day, we encourage you to visit all of the Capital Showcase Maine Veterans ArtCafe throughout November at the Capital Complex in Augusta. Including the art of veterans (art funds provided by the VA). The exhibit recognizes Veterans' service, showcases their art, and encourages them to provide their passion for more information or to see the art online, visit <http://TheMaineArts.com>

ARTS Engage ME
AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS
www.AmericanArtsFund.org

In honor of Veteran's Day on November 11th, Americans for the Arts released a full-page color ad in the Kennebec Journal, in Augusta, MN. The ad recognized the arts leadership of the Maine Congressional delegation and featured information on the economic impact of the arts. The ad also highlighted programs across the state serving active military, veterans, and their families. According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Maine's arts and culture sector is a \$1.5 billion industry, accounting for 2.6% of the state's economy, as well as 16,618 jobs.

You can view the ad at ArtsActionFund.org/MaineAd and also download our fact sheet on 'Why the Arts Matter' in Maine (or your own state) at ArtsActionFund.org/StateFactsheets.



2019 Year-End Campaign

Return the enclosed envelope to make your annual gift to the Arts Action Fund and help us reach our goal of \$30,000!

We are almost there!

Message from President & CEO Robert L. Lynch



Arts Action Fund President and CEO Robert L. Lynch presenting arts advocacy awards at the National Arts Awards gala in NYC.

Dear <<First Name>>,
 We are so grateful to **Blick Art Materials** (owner of Blick and Utrecht stores nationwide) for partnering with the Arts Action Fund for the last six years during National Arts & Humanities Month in October. Blick has recruited more than 60,000 new members to the Arts Action Fund movement. Check out this year's social media promotional poster. We look forward to partnering with Blick and other retail art stores next year.

As we close out 2019, I want to urge all Arts Action Fund members to contribute to our Year-End fundraising campaign to raise \$30,000 by December 31st. We will use these funds to build our grassroots and political efforts next year as we ramp up our efforts for ArtsVote 2020. We'll be mobilizing our grassroots constituents to weigh in on the most important legislative 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 recruit a million Arts Action Fund members and to raise \$100,000 in PAC dollars this election cycle to support as many pro-arts congressional and presidential candidates as possible. Return the attached envelope, or visit ArtsActionFund.org/PAC2019, to make your Year-End gift to support our ArtsVote 2020 efforts.



On October 10th, Americans for the Arts, in conjunction with the Congressional Arts Caucus and the Congressional Humanities Caucus, held a briefing to give congressional staffers a legislative update on the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).



Jan. 30

POLITICAL ACTION
 Americans for the Arts and the Arts Action Fund were awarded the Lobbying Strategy Innovation Award in recognition of their lobbying innovations for our #SAVEtheNEA campaign.



Feb. 15

LEGISLATIVE ACTION
 Congress responded to our advocacy calls, emails, and visits to save the NEA and NEH and took it a step further by increasing their FY'19 annual budgets by \$2 million each, despite President Trump's attempt to terminate them.



Feb. 25

GRASSROOTS ACTION
 Arts Action Fund's Nina Ozlu Tunceli joins Congresswoman Chellie Pingree, co-chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus, in advocating for the arts in Portland, Maine. Congresswoman Pingree's advocacy for increased federal funding for arts and culture helps secure millions of dollars for nonprofit organizations to better serve their communities in Maine and across the country.



Feb. 26

LEGISLATIVE ACTION
 Americans for the Arts/Arts Action Fund President and CEO Robert L. Lynch testified along with Retired Marine Veteran Chris Stowe before the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee on Tuesday, February 26, 2019. They urged the subcommittee to increase NEA funding to no less than \$167.5 million for FY'20 and focused their testimony on the NEA's Creative Forces program, which is managed by Americans for the Arts at 11 military hospitals and centers across the country.

Mar. 5

GRASSROOTS ACTION
 Arts Advocacy Day advocates Rita Moreno, Brian Stokes Mitchell, and Ben Folds stormed Capitol Hill to advocate for increased FY'20 funding for the National Endowment for the Arts, the passage of a universal charitable tax deduction, and the passage of legislation that would improve the creative economy.



April 2

GRASSROOTS ACTION
 The Arts Action Fund releases "Why the Arts Matter" Fact Sheets for all 50 states for advocates around the country to use. Download your state's fact sheet at ArtsActionFund.org/StateFactsheets



2019 ArtsVote Legislative & Political Timeline

See the full timeline at ArtsActionFund.org/Timeline

PAC Update

70 Seats in Play in the House, 15 in Senate

According to the **Cook Political Report** control of Congress will be decided by about 70 congressional seats in play in the U.S. House, and 15 in play in the U.S. Senate. These projections shift from month to month as various challengers get into a race, members of Congress retire and political landscapes shift. For example, Senate races in AL, AZ, CO, and ME are all considered toss-ups based on a variety of factors, such as vote totals in 2018 and 2016. In Maine, Senate Cultural Caucus Co-chair, **Susan Collins (R)** is facing a tough challenge from Maine House Speaker **Sara Gideon**. Among the House races, we're hopefully watching **Rep. Kendra Horn (D-OK)** and **Abby Finkenauer (D-IA)** along with other freshman pro-arts members in southern California, Michigan, and Texas with their reelection efforts. The Arts Action Fund PAC is raising money for some of these candidates and many others. To recommend a candidate for us to support, please download the Candidate Arts Questionnaire at ArtsActionFund.org/ArtsVote and give them to your candidate to fill out. Complete surveys can be emailed to ArtsActionFund@artsusa.org.

State and Local Update

Create NYC Action Plan

The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs recently released their **Create NYC 2019 Action Plan**, which includes a record \$212 million in funding for the city's arts agency. Further, the Action Plan streamlines the scores of recommendations into five objectives with 25 strategies for implementation. The Action Fund congratulates the Department of Cultural Affairs for producing this detailed guide which other cities can use to grow their own arts and cultural industry. View more at CreateNYC.cityofnewyork.us.

Impact of 2019 State Elections

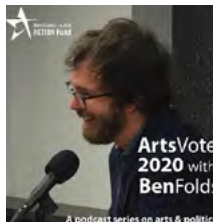
With the completion of the 2019 elections, we turn our attention to the 2020 Presidential and other federal elections. While no single election can predict the future, the results of the 2019 elections can offer a window into the mind of the electorate. For example, Virginia's entire legislature was up for election in November. Republicans had held a slim 20-19 majority in the Senate and 51-49 in the House. Now after the 2019 election, Democrats control both houses for the first time in over three decades, picking up two seats in the Senate (21-19) and six seats in the House (55-45). Democratic wins were driven again by turn out in suburban and exurban areas, as seen with democratic gubernatorial surprise wins in Kentucky and Louisiana.



May 15

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations chaired by Rep. Betty McCollum officially proposed FY'20 funding increases to every federal cultural agency within their portfolio, including the National Endowment for the Arts. Additionally, the U.S. House Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Education Chairman Rep. Rosa DeLauro also proposed FY'20 funding increases to the other federal cultural agencies and arts education programs within their portfolio.



June 6

POLITICAL ACTION

Ben Folds, a highly acclaimed singer-songwriter, and board member of the Arts Action Fund has officially been named the Chairman of ArtsVote 2020. He will host a bipartisan podcast series which allows him to interview 2020 presidential candidates exclusively on the arts and arts education. ArtsActionFund.org/podcast



Aug. 1

POLITICAL ACTION

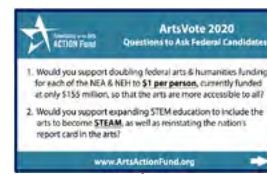
Mary Anne Carter is officially confirmed by the Senate to be chair of the NEA. She will serve a term of four years. She has served as acting chairman of the NEA since June 2018, after serving 18 months as the agency's senior deputy chairman. She was officially nominated to a four-year term as chairman in November 2018. Carter is the former chief policy adviser to former Florida Governor Rick Scott.



Aug. 8

GRASSROOTS ACTION

Ben Folds hosts the 2019 Iowa Arts Forum with Americans for the Arts Action Fund, Iowa Arts Council, Iowa Arts Education Alliance, and the Iowa Cultural Coalition with tips to elevate the creative economy by advancing arts policy at the local, state and national levels. Presidential candidates and surrogates attended and were interviewed by Ben to spark a greater conversation about the arts in America.



Nov. 25

POLITICAL ACTION

Through contributions from Arts Action Fund members like you, the Arts Action Fund PAC was able to disburse over \$35,000 to pro-arts candidates this election cycle. Additionally, Arts Action Fund members are encouraged to carry our "Questions to Ask" pocket card so they're always ready to take action when meeting candidates. ArtsActionFund.org/ArtsVoteTools



Dec. 17

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Congress reaches an agreement to pass all FY'2020 (Oct 2019-Sept 2020) funding bills and avoid another government shutdown. The bills include all five of our top arts funding increases and policy priorities to support the arts and arts education across the country, including NEA and NEH funding at \$162.25 million each. For details, visit ArtsActionFund.org/LegislativeUpdate



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Join us March 30-31, 2020 in Washington, D.C. for
the National Arts Action Summit and the 33rd Annual
Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts & Public Policy.
Registration at AmericansForTheArts.org/NAAS.



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