

May 16, 2017

Dear Members of Congress,

We the undersigned organizations, representing employers and working professionals from across the arts and entertainment industry, write to express our united support for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). We urge Congress, at a minimum, to maintain current funding levels for all three institutions in FY 2018.

As members of the entertainment industry, we see firsthand how the American economy benefits from arts and cultural programming. The arts and entertainment industry contributes over \$700 billion to the nation's annual economic output, equivalent to 4.2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), and employs over four million people across all 50 states. Most people who work in our industry earn a living in family-supporting, middle class careers.

The NEA, NEH, and CPB play vital roles in ensuring that our industry remains an economic engine for the country, while guaranteeing that all Americans have access to the arts and creative, educational content. The NEA, NEH, and CPB support many of the jobs in our industry through direct funding and leveraged grants. In addition, the NEA, NEH, and CPB fund programs and performances that serve as crucial career development opportunities for people who want to work in our industry – particularly Americans who do not live near major cultural centers like Los Angeles and New York City. Our industry simply cannot guarantee that private funding alone will allow these important endeavors to continue.

The economic value of access to cultural and educational content is not limited to our industry. As the economic research firm The Conference Board reports, U.S. employers rank creativity in the top three personality traits important to career success. The NEA, NEH, and CPB help guarantee that Americans in every congressional district, particularly children, have the opportunity to explore and develop their creative instincts. Nurturing the next generation of creators and innovators is vital to ensuring the United States maintains a competent, competitive workforce.

Given the broad economic and societal benefits of the NEA, NEH, and CPB, it is all the more remarkable that the three agencies account for less than 0.02 percent of the federal budget. The NEA, NEH, and CPB are investments in taxpayers' lives, and we urge Congress to fully fund the three agencies in FY 2018.

Sincerely,

Actors' Equity Association  
American Federation of Musicians  
American Guild of Musical Artists  
American Guild of Variety Artists  
Atlanta Ballet  
Ballet West  
Broadway League

Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO  
Directors Guild of America  
Guild of Italian American Artists  
Houston Ballet  
Houston Grand Opera  
International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts  
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers  
League of Resident Theatres  
Metropolitan Opera  
Motion Picture Association of America  
New York City Ballet  
New York City Opera  
Off-Broadway League  
Office and Professional Employees International Union  
Recording Industry Association of America  
SAG-AFTRA  
San Francisco Opera  
Stage Directors and Choreographers Society  
Thirteen/WNET  
Tulsa Ballet  
WLIW  
Writers Guild of America, East