President’s Committee on Arts & Humanities Members

On April 13, 2023, President Biden announced his intent to appoint the following individuals to the newly reinstated President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH) [www.pcah.gov](http://www.pcah.gov). The following individuals will serve as an advisory body to the President on cultural policy.

- First Lady Dr. Jill Biden, Honorary Chair
- Jon Batiste, Member
- Constance M. Carroll, Member
- George Clooney, Member
- Philip J. Deloria, Member
- M. Angélica Garcia, Member
- Jennifer Garner, Member
- Nora Halpern, Member
- Steve Israel, Member
- Marta Kauffman, Member
- Ricky Kirshner, Member
- Troy Kotsur, Member
- Katie McGrath, Member
- Laura Penn, Member
- Amanda Phingbodhipakkiya, Member
- Arnold Rampersad, Member
- Shonda Rhimes, Member
- Kimberly Richter Shirley, Member
- Horacio Sierra, Member
- Anna Deavere Smith, Member
- Joe Walsh, Member
- Kerry Washington, Member
- Pauline Yu, Member
- Tsione Wolde-Michael, Executive Director

The PCAH will also engage the nation’s artists, humanities scholars, and cultural heritage practitioners to promote excellence in the arts, humanities, and museum and library services and demonstrate their relevance to the country’s health, economy, equity, and civic life. Over the past 40 years, PCAH has catalyzed federal programs and played a vital role in the advancement of arts and humanities education, cultural diplomacy, and the creative economy.

Read the full [White House Press release](http://www.whitehouse.gov) to learn more.

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Spring Legislative Fly-ins to Washington, D.C.

After more than 34 years of hosting large annual arts advocacy conferences, Americans for the Arts and the Arts Action Fund launched a new [year-round equitable advocacy program](http://www.americansforthearts.org). This spring, the two organizations hosted their initial two legislative Fly-Ins on April 18-19, 2023, and May 16-17, 2023, and worked with two dynamic cohorts of smaller, more targeted constituent groups composed of influential local and state arts agency and advocacy leaders, as well as individual artists. A full day of [customized advocacy training](http://www.americansforthearts.org) was provided to all 19 advocates prior to their congressional meetings the next day. Cohorts were chosen based on identifying local and state arts leaders, who are constituents of key members of congress with specific influence over arts appropriations and policy legislation.


“As someone whose passion for the arts has led to dedicating my career and life advocating for their growth, I understand the importance of working with our elected officials to demonstrate the impact the arts have in our communities for all ages,” said West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture and History Curator Randall Reid-Smith. “The need for our representatives to vote in favor of policies which help fund the arts is crucial to the continuation of that impact. I appreciate the new targeted approach that the Americans for the Arts’ fly-In has incorporated to ensure the support of our elected officials and look forward to participating in future fly-ins.” (Continued on Page 3)
A Partial Economic Rebound for the Arts in 2021

4.85 million workers were employed to produce arts and cultural goods and services, which is 300,000 fewer workers than pre-pandemic years, but more than the first year of the pandemic (4.6 million workers in 2020). The arts also registered a $17.8 billion international trade surplus in 2021 (down from $28.5 billion in 2020).

Detailed BEA data on the size of the arts and culture industry for every state are now available for download on our newly released 2023 "Why the Arts Matter" state arts factsheets at www.ArtsActionFund.org/StateFactsheets.
Advancing Equity Through the Arts and Humanities

On May 11, 2023, Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA-13) introduced the Equity Through the Arts and Humanities Act (H.R. 3239). The legislation would create a grant program through the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for nonprofit and public entities, including faith-based and community organizations, that serve and are led by people of color. More specifically, the program would support arts and humanities projects that work to dismantle systemic racism through the arts and humanities.

Congresswoman Lee stated, “this bill acknowledges the myriad of benefits of participation in the arts, especially for young people; the cultural and social significance of representation in the arts; and the systemic barriers that keep the arts out of reach in marginalized communities.” Report language regarding the bill was successfully included in last year’s NEA/NEH Interior Appropriations budget. The Advancing Equity through the Arts and Humanities language can be viewed on page 143 of the report.

Americans for the Arts and the Arts Action Fund have endorsed this legislation again this year and will continue working with arts advocates to build further support for this legislation among members of Congress.

Legislative Threats to Free Artistic Expression

Free artistic expression continues to come under attack at the state and local levels as legislative bodies seek to regulate various artistic performances such as Drag Story Hours or theatrical performances where an actor might portray a character of a different gender.

Currently, there are over 40 pieces of legislation in 17 states which seek to regulate these activities. While the bill’s author’s intent is to primarily prohibit children under the age of 18 from seeing drag performances, such as a library story hour, the bills are often vaguely written that they could apply to theatrical performances. For example, a federal judge recently struck down the new Tennessee drag legislation as being vague and chilling constitutionally-protected speech.

Americans for the Arts has created a Threats to Free Artistic Expression web page which overviews the issues, lists the status of the legislation in every state, provides other resources along with ways to get involved.

Spring Legislative Fly-ins to Washington, D.C. (Cont.)

“Americans for the Arts is grateful to these advocates for taking time from their busy schedules to fly to Washington, D.C., to collectively advocate for additional arts funding and better policies from Congress,” said Nolen V. Bivens, President and CEO of Americans for the Arts. “The resulting funding and support from Congress has a direct impact on the arts field as a whole from state and local arts agencies to individual artists.” Arts Action Fund Executive Director Nina Ozlu Tunceli added, “Through this collective advocacy, all elected officials will better understand and realize the substantial impact of the arts and the creative economy upon the lives of every person within their districts and states.”

The spring Fly-Ins focused on four legislative priorities:

- **Increased funding and equitable grantmaking policies** for the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities through the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee.
- **Targeted community arts engagement funding** (arts and healing) in the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs Administration through the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee and the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee.
- **Increased funding and targeted equitable policies for federal arts education programs** in the Department of Education through the Labor, Health, and Human Services Committee and Education Appropriations Subcommittee.
- **Improved charitable and more equitable tax policies for artists** (Performing Arts Parity Tax Act) and donors to nonprofit charities (The Charitable Act) through the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee.
Learn More About Our Year-Round Advocacy Plan for 2023

- **National Training Webinars**
- **Legislative Fly-Ins to Washington, D.C.**
- **Legislative Fly-outs in Your State**
- **Lobbying Based in New Arts Research - AEP6**

Arts Action News

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