

March 13, 2018

Dear Member of Congress:

CERF+ -- The Artists Safety Net is proud to be a National Partner of Arts Advocacy Day 2018.

The lack of a safety net for professional artists working in craft disciplines when personal or natural disasters strike was the impetus in 1985 for a group of artists to create CERF+. From a modest, grass roots mutual aid organization, CERF+ has emerged as one of the leading voices for safeguarding artists' livelihoods to ensure that they have the resources and protections they need to sustain their careers before, during, and after disasters.

Artists are not only vulnerable to disasters; they often contribute significantly to recovery in their communities after disasters. With 33 years of service and more than 8,000 supporters across the country, we are dedicated to a future in which artists are able to thrive and contribute in communities across the United States.

As a National Partner of Arts Advocacy Day, CERF+ is pleased to join with many national arts, humanities, and civic organizations in urging Congress to support legislation that promotes the arts and values artists' contributions to our society. On behalf of our supporters and those we serve, we encourage you to strengthen federal support for the arts, especially in the following ways:

- Cosponsor the CREATE Act in order to invest in the country's workforce and creative economy; to recognize artists, entrepreneurs, and nonprofit arts organizations as contributors to the small business community; and support the creative economy through federal programs and actions. Maintain access to affordable healthcare for artists and other self-employed workers;
- Ensure that artists and other self-employed workers are not at a disadvantage to other small businesses when accessing federal aid, especially after disasters and in emergency recovery;
- Continue bipartisan support with a budget of \$155 million for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in the FY 2019 Interior Appropriations bill in order to preserve access to the cultural, educational, and economic benefits of the arts and to advance creativity and innovation in communities across the United States;
- Preserve incentives for charitable giving by protecting the full scope and value of the tax deduction for all forms of charitable gifts;
- Ensure that changes made under tax reform will encourage more giving by more Americans.

We thank you for valuing the creative work of America's artists and cultural organizations and the contributions they make to our lives. Thank you for your work.

Sincerely,



Cornelia Carey
Executive Director