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Wednesday, August 31, 2022

Federal

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Review [Americans for the Arts](#) summary of [federal creative economy legislation](#).

Arts Workforce

CREATE Act of 2024 ([S. 3759](#) / [HR. 3759](#)) The legislation would expand the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Microloan program qualifications to include artists and arts entrepreneurs, or small businesses that support the creative economy. The bill also provides state, regional, and local arts agencies, artists, and creative workers support through traditional economic development tools.

The bipartisan [Portable Benefits for Independent Workers Pilot Program Act \(S.1696 / H.R. 3482\)](#) would provide much-needed access to health care coverage and retirement benefits for those who do gig work, freelance, or independent contracting jobs.

- Sign on to [Grantmakers in the Arts' endorsement](#).

The bipartisan [Performing Artist Tax Parity Act \(H.R. 2871\)](#) would restore tax fairness for arts workers by allowing them to deduct necessary expenses related to their work. Current status: House bill is in the House Committee on Ways and Means. As yet, the Senate has not introduced a corresponding bill.

At a [congressional briefing](#) this past September, the [Professional Non-Profit Theater Coalition \(PNTC\)](#) launched a new effort to advance the [Supporting Theater and Generating Economic Activity \(STAGE\) Act](#). This current iteration would also provide \$500 million in grant assistance annually to nonprofit theaters for the next five years, or roughly 20% of the eligible organizations' collective budgets.

- [Message Chuck Schumer](#) to express support for the STAGE Act.

Arts Organizations

[The Employee Retention Credit \(ERC\)](#) offers a refundable payroll tax credit for eligible businesses and tax-exempt organizations to retain employee wages and benefits. However, the IRS unilaterally suspended ERC claims processing in September of 2023, and Congress is considering shutting down the program as part of a larger tax program.

- Check the [IRS website](#) to see if you are eligible for this credit.
- Fill out [The Coalition to Preserve American Jobs](#) survey to [share your experiences](#) with the ERC as a business or organization.

[The Advancing Equity Through the Arts and Humanities Act \(H.R. 3239\)](#) is potential federal legislation developed with a working group of artists, creatives, and advocates. The legislation would create a program under the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to provide public and nonprofit entities (including those led by people of color) to support arts and humanities projects that combat systemic racism. As yet, the Senate has not introduced a corresponding bill.

The Fans First Act / Ticket Act ([S. 3457/ HR. 3950](#)) aims to address fraud and deceptive practices in the secondary ticket sales market which adversely impacts the dance ecosystem and broader performing arts sector. The bill will prohibit deceptive websites, speculative ticket sales, and create requirements for all ticket sellers to publicly disclose any additional fees involved with ticket prices.

- Visit the [Fix The Tix Coalition](#) to learn more and email your representative in support of the bills.

Nonprofit Organizations

The bipartisan [Charitable Act \(S. 566 / H.R. 3435\)](#) would extend the deduction for charitable contributions for individuals not itemizing deductions, encouraging charitable giving among moderate-income individuals.

- [Email your representatives](#) to support the Charitable Act.

Arts Education

[The Guarantee Access to Arts and Music Education Act \(GAAME\)](#) of 2023 ([H.R. 969](#) / [S. 364](#)) would support the needs of elementary and secondary students from low-income families with Title I funds to be used for arts and music programs. These programs would be taught by certified arts and music educators and community arts providers, and "arts" would include dance, media arts, theater, and visual arts.

[House Resolution 1033](#) would designate February 28 as National Community Arts Education Day, with the goal of bringing more recognition

to the importance and benefits of a diversified arts education model.

Racial Justice

[Advancing Equity Through the Arts and Humanities Act: H.R. 3239](#) is a federal act to address systemic racism through the arts and humanities in the United States. The proposed legislation would establish a program through the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities that offer grants to public and nonprofit organizations, including those led by people of color, as well as faith-based and community-based groups. The grants will support projects that work towards combating racism and increasing engagement with these organizations.

[House Resolution 414](#), reintroduced in 2023, would recognize that the United States has a moral and legal obligation to provide reparations for the enslavement of Africans and its lasting harm on the lives of millions of Black people in the United States.

Disability Justice

Three bills to increase disability accessibility in the political process were recently introduced:

- The [Accessible Voting Act \(S. 3748 / H.R. 7389\)](#) will make voting in national elections more accessible for people with disabilities.
- The [Removing Access Barriers to Running for Elected Office for People with Disabilities Act \(S. 3747 / H.R. 7351\)](#) will make sure that people with disabilities running for office can still access their federal benefits like Medicaid and SSI.
- The [Accessibility and Inclusion to Diversify \(AID\) Local Government Leadership Act \(S. 3749 / H.R. 7350\)](#) will give money to small local governments so they can provide accommodations to people with disabilities elected to local government.
- Call and educate your Members of Congress on the importance of improving accessibility in the political process. You can reach your Members of Congress by calling the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121.

[Supplemental Security Income Restoration Act](#) of 2024 ([HR. 7138](#)) would modernize and improve SSI by streamlining the claiming process, increasing asset limits, setting the minimum benefit at 100 percent of the Federal Poverty Level, and eliminating punitive reductions in benefits.

- Use Arc's template to [tell Congress to update SSI now](#).

[The Better Care Better Jobs Act \(S. 100 / HR. 547\)](#) is a historic and long-overdue investment in the disability service system as part of a COVID-19 economic recovery to support care for Medicaid recipients and create more and better jobs for the workforce that provides that care. [Review the fact sheet](#).

[The Transformation to Competitive Integrated Employment Act \(H.R. 1263 / S. 533\)](#) supports disabled people in finding, retaining competitive integrated employment, services, and technical assistance and prohibits the payment of subminimum wages.

To stay updated on disability justice policy, visit [The Arc](#) and read [Disability Policy News](#) and [Crip News](#).

BILLS PASSED

Infrastructure

The [Inflation Reduction Act](#) (H.R.5376) and [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) (H.R.3684) were both passed.

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