ARTS ACTION ALERT - FEBRUARY 10, 2011

Thursday, February 10, 2011

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By Americans for the Arts

Next week, the U.S. House of Representatives will bring to the House floor, a Continuing Resolution (CR) appropriations package that proposes to cut dozens of federal agencies and programs for the balance of the current 2011 fiscal year (March 5 through September 30). Yesterday, the House Appropriations Committee revealed details of what some of the cuts will be in this CR package and they include cutting the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) budget to $155 million this year. That's a substantial cut from its currently funded level of $167.5 million.

The battle begins next week when the House CR appropriations package comes to the floor. Each and every one of your Representatives will be voting on possible amendments attempting to make even deeper cuts to the NEA's budget, beyond the $155 million level. It is quite possible members of the Republican Study Committee will offer amendments to fully eliminate the NEA during floor consideration. We need you to send a message to your Members to vote against any amendments to further cut the NEA.

Because of these threats in the House, we are simultaneously working on the Senate strategy; where there may be a better chance to approve a higher funding level for the NEA and counter the cuts in the House version of this bill. By taking two minutes today to send a customizable message via our E-Advocacy Center, we will automatically send letters on your behalf to both your Senators and your House Representative. This will ensure that your voice will be heard by Members of Congress (especially freshmen members), who are now assessing their constituents' viewpoints on these budget cuts.

Also be on the lookout for our alert on President Obama's official FY 2012 budget submission to Congress on Monday, February 14. While that budget is for a different fiscal year than the CR that we'll be dealing with next week, it will signal to the House and Senate the President's funding intentions for the very same agencies that Congress is considering cutting.

Help us continue this important work by becoming an official member of the Arts Action Fund. If you are not already a member play your part by joining the Arts Action Fund today -- it's free and simple.