

OUR WORK

Overview Events Research **Advocacy** Regranting

Wednesday, August 31, 2022

Federal

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Updated October 29, 2025

Have you taken action based on our suggestions? We'd love to hear about it!

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Reference [Arts Action Fund's Breaking News Updates Impacting Arts and Culture](#) for up-to-date national arts news.

National Spending

Congress Passes Major Spending and Tax Bill, Slashing Essential Services

In July, Congress passed the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act," cutting essential services for working-class communities while approving \$3.3 trillion in tax cuts that disproportionately benefit the most wealthy households. While the bill's impacts are far-reaching, several provisions directly affect dance workers and our communities. Overall, the bill advances cultural and economic priorities that risk deepening inequities in arts funding and access, while sidelining the needs of working artists and communities.

- [Learn more about the overall impacts of the new spending bill](#)

Healthcare: The bill approves the largest cuts to Medicaid and Medicare ever, which the Congressional Budget Office estimates will cause 16 million Americans to lose their healthcare coverage.

- [Learn more about the New York State healthcare impacts](#)
- [Join the Campaign for New York Health](#)
- [Review the Freelancers' Guide to Health Insurance](#)

Food security: The bill cuts the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, causing an estimated 22 million families to lose some or all SNAP benefits.

- [Learn more about the impacts to SNAP](#)
- [Find free food help in NYC](#)

Immigration: The bill provides more than \$150 billion for immigration enforcement while rolling back asylum and child welfare protections.

- [Review New York Immigration Coalition's statement on the immigration impact](#)
- [Check out Make the Road NY's "We Protect Us" immigration resources](#)

Nonprofits: The bill is estimated to reduce resources available to nonprofit organizations by disincentivizing charitable giving, which will significantly affect the nonprofit dance sector.

- [Review the impact on nonprofits](#)

Arts and culture: The bill directs \$40 million toward Trump's "Garden of Heroes," conceived in response to the removal of Confederate statues, and allocates \$250 million to the "Make Kennedy Center Great Again" initiative. It also limits access to arts education by making some lower-earning degree programs ineligible for federal student loan support, disproportionately affecting students pursuing arts degrees.

- [Learn more about the impact on arts and culture](#)
- [Learn more about the impacts on federal student loans](#)

Executive Orders

Executive Order Tracking

Since entering office, President Trump has signed numerous executive orders that threaten the safety and rights of our communities. These include actions affecting nonprofit organizations, federal funding, immigration, LGBTQ+ rights, and DEI programs.

Though many of these orders are facing legal challenges or have limited enforcement power, they represent harmful federal priorities and racist ideologies that we must be prepared to respond to.

- [Browse the National Council on Nonprofits' Summary of the Executive Orders Impacting Nonprofits](#)
- [Review Americans for the Arts FAQs on Executive Actions Impacting the Arts](#)

- [Browse the Immigration Policy Tracking Project](#)
- [Review The National LGBTQ+ Bar's Executive Order Litigation Tracker](#)
- [Scan an Updating List of Executive Orders by Category](#)

Arts and Humanities Funding

National Endowment for the Arts Funding

In August, Congress began its appropriations process, deciding funding for many federal agencies including the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

The U.S. House has proposed \$135 million for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), a 35% cut from current levels. The U.S. Senate has proposed \$207 million, maintaining level funding. In recent years, the final number has matched the Senate's proposal, meaning advocates have a strong opportunity to protect current funding levels.

- [Learn more about the proposed NEA & NEH funding numbers](#)

Trump Executive Order Tightens Oversight of Federal Grantmaking

An executive order published on August 7, 2025 provides new guidelines on federal grantmaking. The order requires grants to "advance the President's policy priorities," prohibits grants for projects perceived to "promote anti-American values," and gives federal agencies authority to terminate grants for convenience, and increases reporting requirements for grantees.

Taken together, these provisions expand political influence over arts funding, add new administrative burdens for organizations, and put equity-focused programs at heightened risk of losing support.

- [Review Trump's executive order on federal grantmaking](#)
- [Review the National Council on Nonprofits' FAQs on this Executive Order](#)
- [Check out the Chronicle of Philanthropy's coverage on the grantmaking order](#)
- [Learn more about how the grantmaking order will impact grant recipients](#)

NEA Grant Cancellations

Beginning May 2, hundreds of arts organizations across the US [received emails](#) from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) announcing that their funding had been cancelled due to the agency's new priorities as directed by the administration. This included the termination of active grants and the withdrawal of pending grant offers.

These notifications coincided with sweeping staffing resignations at the agency and a 2026 federal budget proposal that [calls for the elimination of the NEA](#).

- [Review our Advocacy Alert on the NEA cancellations](#)
- [Explore Americans for the the Arts 'Protect the NEA' resources](#)
- [Call Congress to demand they support the NEA](#)
- [Email Congress in support of the NEA](#)

NEA Guidelines Changes and Lawsuit

In February 2025, The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)—the federal government's arts agency—announced changes to its grantmaking policies, making it more difficult for BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ arts organizations to access federal funding.

Key changes include:

- Eliminating Challenge America Grants, which fund arts for underserved communities.
- Amending eligibility requirements for Grants for Arts Projects, requiring five years of programming history instead of three.
- Mandating compliance with all Executive Orders, including recent anti-diversity, equity, and inclusion and anti-trans policies.

However, some of these changes have been successfully challenged in court:

- In February, the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education and others challenged two Trump-issued anti-diversity executive orders. A district judge temporarily blocked the orders, which led federal agencies, including the NEA, to stop enforcement.
- On March 6, several arts organizations, represented by the American Civil Liberties Union, sued the NEA over its anti-trans requirements. On September 19th, the court ruled in favor of the arts organizations, determining that the anti-trans requirements violate First Amendment protections on free speech.

- [Learn about the outcome of the ACLU/NEA Trial](#)
- [Review a Summary of the ACLU/NEA Trial](#)
- [Learn more about the block on anti-DEI executive orders](#)
- [Learn more about the NEA guidelines](#)
- [Review the Grants for Arts Projects guidelines](#)
- [Complete Dance/USA's survey on the impact of changes to NEA grant requirements](#)

NEH and IMLS Staffing Cut

In April 2025, The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) joined the slew of federal government agencies to be targeted by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). As a result, 80-85% of IMLS and NEH staff were placed on indefinite administrative leave—impeding the agencies' critical functions—and canceled all open grants including funding for state humanities agencies.

Two lawsuits have been filed to stop the defunding of the IMLS. This includes one filed by 21 State Attorneys General and one filed by the American Library Association and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

- [Take action to protect the IMLS and NEH](#)
- [Review the National Humanities Alliance's statement on threats to the NEH](#)

- [Review the American Library Association statement on threats to the IMLS](#)
- [Explore what to do if your federal grant or contract is terminated](#)

Nonprofit Organizations

200+ Arts Groups Pledge to Protect Artistic Freedom

Amidst escalating attacks on arts and culture, Dance/NYC joined over 200 cultural organizations and 700 individuals to sign onto a statement organized by the National Coalition Against Censorship (NCAC) and the Vera List Center for Art and Politics, pledging to preserve artistic freedom in spite of political pressure.

- [Review the "collective courage" arts and culture statement and sign on](#)
- [Review Playbill coverage of the collective arts and culture statement](#)
- [Learn more about NCAC's arts & culture advocacy](#)

"Nonprofit Killer" Bill

In September 2024, the controversial "Nonprofit Killer" bill, [HR 9495](#), passed in the U.S. House of Representatives. The bill would give the Secretary of the Treasury power to revoke the nonprofit tax status of organizations by designating them "terrorist supporting organizations" without giving justification or due process. It faced [widespread opposition](#) from nonprofit and civil society groups, who fear that the executive branch could use these broad and unchecked powers to silence dissent and curb freedom of speech. While messaging around the bill has targeted Palestinian human rights groups, the bill could be used to target a wide array of advocacy that the executive branch deems threatening.

The bill was not addressed in the Senate in 2024, nor has it been reintroduced in 2025. Language from this bill appeared in drafts of the House Republican Tax Bill ("One Big Beautiful Bill Act" / [HR 1](#)), but was not included in the final draft.

- [Review Coverage of "Nonprofit Killer" Language in the 2025 Budget Bill](#)
- [Review the ACLU's letter with 130 civil society groups in opposition of HR 9495](#)
- [Check out Nonprofit Quarterly's recent coverage of HR 9495](#)
- [Scan the bill text of HR 9495](#)

Lawyers Alliance Resources

In December 2024, in preparation for changes in the federal administration, [Lawyers Alliance for New York](#) put out two new resources for nonprofits, for guidance on navigating increased federal oversight and interactions with immigration enforcement.

- [Review the 2025 Federal Compliance Legal Alert](#)
- [Review Guidance to Nonprofits Regarding Immigration Enforcement](#)

Charitable Act

The bipartisan [Charitable Act \(S. 317 / H.R. 801\)](#) would extend the deduction for charitable contributions for individuals not itemizing deductions, encouraging charitable giving among moderate-income individuals.

Arts Workforce

Kennedy Center Terminates Entire Dance Programming Team

On August 21, the Kennedy Center terminated the entire dance programming team, a move that comes amid sweeping changes and increasing politicization at the institution. Earlier this year, President Trump was appointed chair of the Kennedy Center, and launched a "Make Kennedy Center Great Again" initiative, allocating \$256 million of funding.

The terminated staff were involved in efforts to unionize through the Kennedy Center United Arts Workers, a group organizing in response to these changes. Their goals include securing freedom of speech protections for staff, improving wages and benefits, and establishing stronger safeguards against termination.

In response to the firings, workers have circulated a petition calling for the reinstatement of the dance programming team. Since the firings, the Kennedy Center has appointed Stephen Nakagawa as the new Director of Dance Programming after he criticized "radical leftist ideologies in ballet."

- [Review coverage on the termination of Kennedy Center dance workers](#)
- [Call for the reinstatement of the dance programming team](#)
- [Learn more about the Kennedy Center United Arts Workers](#)
- [Review coverage on Kennedy Center's new Director of Dance Programming](#)

National Labor Relations Board Member Removed

In January, President Trump removed Gwynne Wilcox from the [National Labor Relations Board](#) (NLRB), the first Black woman to ever serve on the Board. The NLRB enforces the National Labor Relations Act, which is what protects the right of workers to unionize and collectively bargain. Wilcox's removal has temporarily immobilized the NLRB, as it legally requires at least three members to function but now only has two.

The National Labor Relations Act allows the President to remove board members only in cases of neglect or wrongdoing, and with prior notice—neither of which occurred. This raises serious concerns about workers' rights and the expansion of presidential authority.

- [Review coverage of Gwynne Wilcox's removal](#)
- [Learn more about the importance of unions for dance workers](#)

FEMA Reforms

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has implemented major reforms to help self-employed individuals, including artists,

receive assistance directly from the agency instead of solely through the Small Business Administration (SBA). This change—effective for disasters happening on or after March 22, 2024—focuses on those with business materials at home or in their vehicle.

- [Review one-pager](#) on FEMA updates
- [Learn how FEMA's changes will benefit artists and creatives](#)
- [Check out the full text](#) of the changes

Legality of Noncompete Clauses

In April 2024, the Federal Trade Commission published a new rule that bans noncompete clauses. This rule states that contracts cannot contain language that prevents employees from accepting new work or starting a new business after their current employment ends. However, in August 2024, the rule was blocked by a federal district court in Texas. The FTC is considering appealing this ruling to a higher court, which could reinstate their ability to enforce the rule.

- [Learn more about how the FTC rule was blocked by a federal judge](#)
- [Explore the FTC's rule banning noncompetes](#)

Performing Artist Tax Parity Act

The bipartisan [Performing Artist Tax Parity Act \(H.R. 721\)](#) would restore tax fairness for arts workers by allowing them to deduct necessary expenses related to their work.

Arts Education

National Community Arts Education Day

In [2024](#), and again in [2025](#), Nydia Velázquez introduced a House Resolution that 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.

Arts Audiences

Ticketing Reform

The Ticket Act ([S. 281](#) / [H.R. 1402](#)) 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. The Ticket Act has passed in the House and is now in committee in the Senate.

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

Racial Justice

Reparations for Black Americans

[House Resolution 414](#), reintroduced in 2025, 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.

Fearless Foundation Lawsuit

In August 2023, the [Fearless Foundation](#)—a non-profit that provides grants, tools, and mentorship to women of color to combat underfunding in venture capital—was sued under the premise that their grant program violates a federal statute prohibiting race-based discrimination in contracts. In September 2024, The Fearless Fund announced it had settled in the lawsuit, permanently closing a grant program for Black women-owned businesses.

The case only acts as legal precedent in Alabama, Florida, and Georgia. Even in those states, most racial diversity-related grantmaking should be able to continue. The legal case against Fearless Fund hinged on the idea that the grant was a contract, not a gift. Funders in these states should seek legal counsel and limit requirements on grantees to avoid grants being construed as contracts.

- [Review the Chronicle of Philanthropy's coverage on the Fearless Fund settlement](#)
- [Scan Inside Philanthropy's article on the implications of the settlement](#)
- [Learn more about the Fearless Fund case history](#)

Disability Justice

Digital Accessibility

On April 8, 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice published a new rule under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This rule sets accessibility requirements for all web content and mobile apps managed by state and local governments. It is instrumental in ensuring that disabled people can access vital government services and participate fully in civic life.

- Check out the [Department of Justice's Press Release](#)
- [Review the ADA Fact Sheet on the New Rule](#)
- [Learn more about digital accessibility](#)

Immigration

Thousands of Anti-ICE Protestors Are Met with Police Violence

Since early June 2025, thousands of people across the country have joined protests against the escalating deportations and state violence against immigrants. The locus of these protests have been in Los Angeles, where police have implemented liberal use of tear gas, rubber

bullets, flash-bang grenades, and other weapons, and President Trump deployed over 4,000 National Guard troops and 700 Marines.

In New York City, many protests have centered around a lower Manhattan courthouse where ICE have arrested people attending their immigration hearings. Families are caught off-guard, detained, and separated by ICE agents, who are often masked and rarely identify themselves by name and agency. City Council lawmakers have called for an investigation on possible violations of sanctuary city laws by NYPD.

- [Follow coverage of protests in Los Angeles](#)
- [Learn more about NYC courthouse ICE arrests and protests](#)
- [Review coverage on probe of NYPD sanctuary city violations](#)
- [Contact your representatives to support the New York for All Act](#)
- [Take action to support NY Dignity Not Detention](#)
- [Donate to the Immigration Bond Freedom Fund](#)

Travel Ban

In early June 2025, the Trump administration issued a full or partial travel ban on residents of 19 countries, echoing the widely-criticized "Muslim ban" from his first term, but expanding its reach. Many of the affected countries are Muslim-majority and all are outside of Europe. While existing visas will not be revoked, new visas will be heavily restricted or entirely blocked, depending on the country and type of visa. The administration is also considering adding 36 countries to this list.

- [Review Artists from Abroad's news update on the travel ban](#)
- [Review Artists from Abroad's latest guidance on visa processing](#)
- [Review NPR coverage on the impact of the travel ban](#)

VISA Fees

Starting April 1, 2024, a new UCSIS rule went into effect, increasing visa fees and changing the application form for O & P visas. It also increases the cost of Premium Processing Service and extends premium processing time, as well as limiting the number of beneficiaries that can be included in a single petition. This means that large ensembles will need to file multiple petitions.

- Explore the [UCSIS Frequently Asked Questions on the new rule](#)
- Check out the [Artists From Abroad news alert](#)
- [Review the final rule via the U.S. Government Federal Register](#)

AI Policy

AI Policy Roadmap

In May 2024, a Senate working group on artificial intelligence (AI) policy released a roadmap with a number of policy recommendations for governing AI. These recommendations emerged from a series of nine AI "Insight Forums" conducted throughout 2023. Recommendations consider issues like copyright transparency, bias in AI, and the impacts of AI on the workforce. So far, Congress has failed to pass comprehensive AI legislation.

The development of AI policy will have large impacts on the creativity, innovation, and livelihoods of the dance community.

- [Scan a one-page summary of the AI policy roadmap](#)
- [Review the full AI policy roadmap](#)
- [Check out Tech Policy Press's AI Insight Forum Tracker](#)

[< back](#)

[next listing](#)