



Statement on Proposed Elimination of the National Endowment for the Arts February 12, 2018

On February 12, President Trump submitted his administration's budget request to Congress for fiscal year 2019. Entitled, "Efficient, Effective, Accountable: An American Budget," this White House proposal once again calls for elimination of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and other federal cultural agencies.

Eliminating the NEA would hurt every state and jurisdiction across America. It would undercut not only our cultural assets, but also our prosperity, our productivity and our national pride.

The United States Senate and House of Representatives rejected a similar White House attempt to eliminate the NEA last year. Both chambers of Congress voted to sustain funding for the NEA because:

- **Eliminating the NEA would undermine a sector that drives American prosperity.** The arts and culture contribute [\\$730 billion](#) to the U.S. economy, yielding a \$26 billion trade surplus and creating 4.8 million jobs.
- **Eliminating the NEA will not balance the federal budget.** The NEA receives a mere [0.004%](#) of the total federal budget, less than 1/2 of one hundredth of one percent. Despite this modest investment the arts offer a net gain, returning [\\$27.5 billion](#) in tax revenue to federal, state, county and municipal governments nationwide.
- **Every NEA grant dollar [leverages more than \\$9](#) in matching funds** and other contributions. This impressive return on investment is a great deal for taxpayers.
- **The NEA and states have an exemplary state-federal partnership.** On top of the direct grants awarded by the NEA, 40% of the NEA's grant funds (\$47 million in FY2017) are allocated to [states and regions](#). Through this partnership, federal funds are used to address the needs and priorities of local communities and help to catalyze significant state investments in the arts ([\\$358 million](#) in FY2018).
- **The NEA's programs address top policy priorities** for lawmakers and citizens alike. The NEA is [healing our wounded warriors](#); [leading community](#)

[revitalization efforts](#); and boosting creative thinking and academic outcomes through [arts education](#).

- **Rural areas and low-income communities would suffer disproportionately from reductions in NEA funding.** 43% of NEA projects take place in [high-poverty](#) neighborhoods. \$15.7 million in NEA direct grant funds are awarded to [rural communities and small towns](#).
- **A solely private funding model will leave too many communities behind.** Philanthropic giving in the United States is [geographically disproportional](#), with rural areas receiving only 5.5% of foundation grant dollars. Public funding for the arts plays an essential role in making sure *all* American communities [get their fair share](#). Loss of federal leadership for the arts will have a chilling effect throughout the arts ecosystem.

In sum, **the evidence shows that federal investments in the arts are truly "efficient, effective and accountable."** NASAA urges Congress to sustain funding for the NEA to ensure that the economic, civic and educational benefits of the arts remain available to all states and jurisdictions across America.

The White House's budget request is just the first step in an extensive budgeting process. Congress holds the ultimate constitutional authority to appropriate funds to federal agencies and will formulate a budget for the NEA in the months ahead. The NEA has earned strong bipartisan support on Capitol Hill, and NASAA will be working in collaboration with many allies to realize full funding for the arts.

NASAA is deeply disappointed by the President's proposal to eliminate the NEA in 2019. **We are just as deeply resolved to sustain the NEA.** And we are not alone. Our conviction is shared by Republicans and Democrats; by civic leaders who have seen their communities restored through the arts; by businesses who need innovative workers; by veterans who are using the arts to recover from battle wounds; by parents who want their children to succeed in school; and by hardworking taxpayers who know that the arts are essential to their community's well-being.

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