Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 2, 2005

The Hon. Ralph Regula, Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2358 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Hon. David Obey, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula and Ranking Member Obey:

We are writing to urge you to ensure that the final fiscal year 2006 Labor/HHS Appropriations bill includes at least $35.7 million for the Arts in Education program at the U.S. Department of Education. Years of research demonstrates that a significant link exists between arts education and students' academic performance, as well as their social development, motivations, attitudes, and disposition toward learning.

Though the Department of Education has not requested specific funding for the program, over the past five years, Congress has approved incremental funding increases to the Arts in Education program that have resulted in 122 awards to communities throughout the country. The Arts in Education program at the U.S. Department of Education funds model programs that bring arts education to schools across the country, and funds professional development of arts educators. The program supports the ongoing national arts education initiatives of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and *VSA arts*, which ensure that people with disabilities can participate in the arts.

As you know, No Child Left Behind recognizes the arts as a core subject of learning. This commitment to quality arts education is reinforced at the state level, where all 50 states have adopted standards in the arts or require their school districts to do so. Students who take regular arts courses are shown to score on average 90 to 100 points better on their SATs. Arts education also reinforces student achievement in reading and math. Students are shown to have better attendance at school, lower drop-out rates, greater participation in community service, and higher self-esteem. At-risk teens who participate in arts programs are half as likely to repeat their crimes.

As the states work to implement NCLB, we must provide funding to sustain the national development and dissemination of these vital programs through the U.S. Department of Education. We urge you to support the educational development of our schoolchildren and the professional development of our teachers by acceding to the

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Senate, and including at least $35.7 million in funding for the Arts in Education at the U.S. Department of Education.

Sincerely,

Jerrold Nadler

James Leach

Sherwood Boehlert

Louise Slaughter

Christopher Shays

Tim Holden

Tom Lantos

Corrine Brown

Norm Dicks

Major R. Owens

Sander Levin

Gary L. Ackerman

Jim Moran

Barney Frank

Lynn C. Woolsey

Edward Shea

Henry A. Waxman

George Miller

Ben Cardin

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Ben Chandler

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Albert R. Wynn

Jim Marshall

Raul M. Grijalva

John Spratt

Tom Udall

Nims Van Hollen

Kim Gordon

Rahm Emanuel

Susan A. Davis

Tim Johnson

Tim Bishop

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Tom Allen

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Julia Carson

Earl Pomeroy

Yvonne M. Christian

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Danny K. Davis

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R. Gran

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Tammy Baldwin

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Jim McDermott

Kendrick B. Meek

Stephanie Tubbs Jones

Signatories of the FY06 Arts in Education Appropriations Conference Letter:

Abercrombie
Ackerman
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Beccera
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