

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

H5652

July 27, 2011

Representative James Moran (D-VA-8)

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Time: 21:00]

We're a great country. Great countries understand the importance of the arts. They understand that it's important not only to communicate with one another but to leave a lasting legacy for future generations. The arts have the ability to communicate the most fundamental aspirations of mankind. They have the ability to evoke compassion. They have the ability to evoke the kind of spiritedness that causes countries to show undaunted courage and to rise above the problems of the day in pursuit of far more noble national objectives.

The value of the arts transcends anything that we can quantify in terms of dollars and cents. We should be extraordinarily proud of our National Endowment for the Arts. Denyce Graves, who is one of the finest opera singers in the world, who can stir the emotions just by hearing her beautiful, extraordinary voice, said that she grew up in Washington, where the Kennedy Center is. But it could have been the other end of the world if she had not been able to get into a program funded by the National Endowment for the Arts.

There are any number of men and women, young, middle-aged, old, who have come into contact because of the outreach that the National Endowment for the Arts has provided. And there are any number of communities across the country who, by use of the arts--by setting up a theater, by pulling people together, by getting a small amount of money from the NEA, which is far more an endorsement than it is financial support--have been able to develop local economies.

We've heard from a number of big-name performers now who said they got their entry, the development of their career through the NEA. Some gave back by developing a theater in communities that they thought had seen their best days behind them. And yet by uniting the community, it's clear now their best days are ahead of them because young people want to stay in that community. They're excited about the arts that are provided.

This program does so much with so little. Yet the gentleman wants to cut \$10.6 million. That's 0.03 of 1 percent of nondefense domestic discretionary funding. We had \$174 million in the fiscal year 2011 bill. It was cut down to \$155 million, ultimately, for FY11. Now it's been cut another \$20 million--down to \$135 million.

I know my good friend from Idaho, the chair of the committee, wishes and knows it should be more. I think most of us, when we reflect, understand that if we continue to take money from programs that provide so much to, really, the heart and the soul of this Nation, we will lose those instruments we have to reduce the harshness and the rancor that divide us. It's the powerful media of the arts that

enable us to transcend our differences, to appreciate real beauty, and the truth that comes through the fine arts and the grace that ennobles the human spirit.

NEA is a catalyst. It helps us create and sustain arts. It doesn't really fund much. What it does is to spawn the arts. It generates investment in the arts. In fact, the gentleman mentioned philanthropy. There's a great deal of money out in this country. We're still the wealthiest country in the world, no matter how much people would like us to think that we're poverty-stricken, that we're seeing some of our worst days. We're a great and powerful and wealthy Nation. Philanthropy is the principal source of funding of the arts. But NEA shapes much of that funding. It's a magnet for businesses. Almost 700,000 businesses are involved in creation and distribution of the arts.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman from Virginia has expired.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. Moran was allowed to proceed for 1 additional minute.)

Mr. MORAN. I do think that it's important that we make this nominal investment in the cultural lives of our citizens and in our children's futures. I can't imagine how a Nation as rich and prosperous as ours would not consider it a priority to provide funding for the National Endowment for the Arts.

There's too much that divides us as a Nation. This is something that should be uniting, Democrat and Republican, liberal and conservative. Everyone can appreciate the arts because it inspires us all. It inspires us to look past the parochial, the small-mindedness to see the big picture and to appreciate greatness.

This amendment should be defeated, and in it we should send a message that we understand what's important to the lifeblood of our national community.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman, Mike Simpson (R-ID-2)

Mr. SIMPSON. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the Walberg amendment. First, let me associate myself with the words of my good friend from Virginia and his comments on this. The Walberg amendment would return the NEA funding to the 2006 levels of \$126 million. The National Endowment for the Arts--the NEA--is funded in this bill at \$135 million, which is a \$20 million reduction from the fiscal year 2011 enacted level, a \$32.5 million reduction from the fiscal year 2010 enacted level, and a \$10 million reduction from the fiscal year 2008 enacted level.

I was asked earlier by a Member if I would support just going back to the 2008 level. We could do that but we'd have to add another \$10 million into it. And we, frankly, just don't have it. This would take it back to the 2006 level, as I said. Overall, the committee has cut \$2.1 billion in this bill from the fiscal year 2011 enacted level. This is on top of the \$2.6 billion we cut from the bill earlier this year.

I think this amendment is excessive. But I will tell you that for some people, voting against any funding for the arts is okay with them. I'm not suggesting that that's what the sponsor of this amendment is proposing. He's only proposing a reduction in this. But there are Members who believe that the Federal Government or a State government--no government--should be involved in the arts at all. I disagree.

When we ran into problems several years ago before I was here--maybe it was when Mr. *Moran* was here; I can't remember--but they ran into some controversies with the arts and the funding for individual artists that they've done. Since then, the Interior Appropriations Committee has done, working with the NEA, some reforms. So we don't fund individual artists. We fund what the intent is, I think, of the National Endowment for the Arts, and that is to get the arts out to the rest of America. If you're sometimes in a large city and that type of thing, you have access to arts. But when you're in Salmon, Idaho, you don't have access to the arts like they do in some of the other areas.

So one of the things I've been focused on in working with Chairman Landesman is making sure the arts get out to rural America so that they have an opportunity to see these art performances, whether they're the visual arts or the performing arts or other things. But we need to get them out to rural America. If you want to come to Boyce, Idaho, you will have missed Boyce, Idaho, in the summer if you don't go to the Idaho Shakespeare Festival, partly funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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[Time: 21:10]

Yes, they raise private funds and have sponsorships and other things, but part of their funding comes from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Chairman Landesman was out in Idaho last spring, I guess it was, and we toured around Idaho and looked at some of the arts programs, at the local arts agencies that receive some funding from the NEA, and we looked at the impact it had on their operations. We also went to Jerome High School where the actors who did their performances in Boise City, at the Idaho Shakespeare Festival, toured the schools and gave performances to students. Then they sat there afterwards and talked with the students about what it was to be in the performing arts--how you get into it, what the pluses and minuses of it were, and other things. They helped educate these students in these communities. It's a very important thing.

There are a variety of very popular programs in this bill which are popular on both sides of the aisle. The American Jazz Masters program, the Heritage Fellowships, The Big Read program, and Shakespeare in American Communities have their funding maintained, not at the previous levels, but at a level so that they can maintain these very popular programs. The chairman has introduced a new program that we're working with him on--exactly how it would work and what it would be--called Our Town, which is how the arts can help transform local communities and other things through a grant program, so we've been working with him.

I will tell you that the arts are important, and I think having a Federal investment in the arts is an important thing to have.

Mr. WALBERG. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SIMPSON. I would be happy to yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. WALBERG. I thank the chairman for yielding.

I just want to make it clear because, as I've listened to the opposition to this, it appears one didn't catch my train of thought. I'm not saying that arts or the NEA is wrong. I'm saying it's time to make priority decisions.

Certain priority decisions, as recently as November of 2010, fund programs such as Fire in the Belly--I won't go into the full description of it--and Hide and Seek, which can be considered pornography and which was, in fact, portrayed as that in an exhibit. Those are things that are priority decisions.

So I'm saying it is time, if we're funding those, to give the taxpayer a break and say, if you want to attend those or support those, do it through philanthropy or do it through initial sponsorships themselves but not through the taxpayer.

Mr. SIMPSON. In reclaiming my time, I appreciate the gentleman's concern. The Hide and Seek program, as the gentleman mentioned, was not an NEA program. It was not funded by the NEA, and that was not part of the NEA.

We have a tendency to think that anything that's done in this country or in this State or in this community that is done in the name of arts is done by the NEA. That's not the truth. So, when we attack them because of Hide and Seek, that's just not an accurate statement.

Again, there have been times in the past when there have been criticisms of the NEA, mainly because of the individual artist funding that went on. The committee has addressed that, and they have made reforms in working with the NEA to make sure that those types of things are not funded in this bill and that we don't fund individual artists. The main funding of the program is to get the arts out into the rural communities. Like I said, the American Jazz Masters program and The Big Read program are all vitally important programs that, I think, the American people like and that, I think, Members on both sides of the aisle like.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. *Reed*) having assumed the chair, Mr. *Paulsen*, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2584) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

Representative Louise Slaughter (D-NY-28)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. The National Endowment for the Arts has a 40-year history of investing in communities across the country to expand access to the arts. The NEA has awarded 2,400 grants, spanning communities in all 435 congressional districts.

The proposed cuts to the NEA would have a crippling effect on a program that has been proven to work. Often when I talk about the arts and how I feel about them, I always say how thankful I am to be able to work in an art building that is a masterpiece, but I'm going to be practical tonight. All we're interested in is money, and that's what I'm going to talk about. I hope that people will pay attention to what we get for that little bit of money.

In FY 2010, the Federal Government invested \$167.5 million in the NEA for the purpose of providing funding to nonprofit arts organizations. That funding created \$166.2 billion in total economic activity, supported 5.7 million jobs, and--listen to this one--generated to the U.S. Treasury \$12.6 billion in tax revenue. That does not include the State tax revenue or the local tax revenue. So we spent \$167 million and got back \$12.6 billion.

I defy anybody in here to tell us that we get that kind of return on any money we spend here. I wish we could find more ways to multiply our money by such a magnitude while enhancing the public good at the same time. Investment opportunities like these are few and far between, and we should be expanding our investment in such a successful program, not cutting its funding to the bone.

I am the proud co-chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus, a group that has supported the NEA for almost 30 years. The Arts Caucus is composed of 186 dedicated, bipartisan Members who are committed to the growth and the success of the arts. Why? Because the arts make a difference.

The NEA reached its peak level of funding in fiscal year 1992, but it has never fully recovered from a 40 percent cut in fiscal year 1996 when, once again, people mischaracterized the work of the NEA. We have seen progress with increasing NEA funding since fiscal year 2008, but just last year, the NEA was forced to deal with a crippling cut again to its annual budget. If this year's appropriations bill takes effect, the NEA will have had its budget cut by 20 percent in just the last few months. These cuts are not sustainable and do great harm to the success of the arts sector across the country.

There is widespread national support for the NEA and the arts, including from companies like Westinghouse and Bravo. Actually, what really happened so much for us that was so good was when Bravo and Westinghouse particularly said they would rather hire people who had backgrounds in art because of what they were able to do--their innovation and using both sides of the brain. Bravo was wonderful, advertising all the time how important arts are to the children in this country. The bipartisan U.S. Conference of Mayors made art a priority in their 10-point plan, saying Federal resources must also be invested in nonprofit arts organizations through their local arts agencies with the full funding of the Federal arts and cultural agencies.

[Time: 21:20]

In addition, I have a letter from 26 national art organizations urging Congress to prevent any further reduction to the investment in our Nation's arts and culture infrastructure, which I would like to submit for the **RECORD**.

The simple truth is that funding of the arts creates jobs. There are 756,007 arts-related businesses in the United States that employ 3 million people. In my district, there are 1,229 arts-related businesses that employ 15,864 people. And remember what's already been said so well by Mr. *Simpson* is that this is seed money from the National Endowment of the Arts which brings in other

money--public money, private money--which is terribly important to make these programs survive. And these programs, as I've already pointed out, are an economic gold mine. They employ creative workforce, they spend money locally, they generate government revenue, and are a cornerstone of tourism and economic development.

Along with creating and supporting jobs, the arts provide job skills to our Nation's youth--this is very important to understand--that are marketable to the innovative companies that drive our economy and push America to the forefront in the global marketplace. I've already mentioned Westinghouse, but there are many more.

Exposure to the arts fosters learning, discovery, and achievement in our country. This is, again, simply a fact. Research has proven participation in arts education programs stimulate the creative, holistic, subjective, and intuitive portions of the human brain.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman from New York has expired.

(By unanimous consent, Ms. *Slaughter* was allowed to proceed for 2 additional minutes.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. For example, from what we've been told by the University of California-Davis, the only doctors who really understand what they hear in a stethoscope are those who have studied music. High school music students score 102 points higher on the SATs than their peers. Students with 4 years of art in high school obtain 57 points more on their SAT.

So we're making an investment in our students and our future.

But they play other important roles elsewhere in the economy.

Businesses are attracted to communities with a strong arts sector. And we see that everywhere there is art in existence, the presence of the arts can revitalize rural areas, inner cities and areas struggling with poverty. Cultural tourism brings in \$192 billion every year to the U.S. economy.

Listen to those figures. I hope to goodness everybody is as impressed as I am.

Furthermore, American arts are an important export for our country, bringing in \$30 billion more every year.

One statistic that I found particularly telling is that in 2010, the attendance at three New York museums--the Met, MoMA, and the Guggenheim--exceeded the attendance of all of the New York professional sports teams, all of them combined, by over 300,000 visits. People are interested in arts due in part to the NEA, and they come again and again and bring their families.

Along with all of this is a great intrinsic value that we know. I really must say that a lot of people think that art is not important, and they don't think about it or what it does to the human spirit. Art in so many ways tells us who we were, who we are, and who we hope to be. And if you think you're not affected by it, tell me what happens to you when you hear ``Taps," ``Amazing Grace," ``America the Beautiful," and the stirring that it gives in your whole person and makes you want to be better than you are.

Please, please don't decimate this program in which we invest so little but get back so very much.

July 25, 2011.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC.

Dear Representative, as the FY12 Interior Appropriations bill comes to the floor for consideration by the full House, we write to urge you to prevent further cuts to funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The direct federal investment in the artistic capacity of our nation supports thousands of jobs, strengthens communities, improves lifelong learning, and boosts this country's international competitive advantage.

Every U.S. Congressional district benefits from an NEA grant, leveraging additional support from a diverse range of private sources to combine funding from government, business, foundation, and individual donors. The NEA awarded almost 2,400 grants in those districts in FY 2010. The NEA has provided strategic leadership and investment in the arts for more than 40 years. Americans can now see professional productions and exhibitions of high quality in their own hometowns. Among the proudest accomplishments of the NEA is the growth of arts activity in areas of the nation that were previously underserved or not served at all, especially in rural and inner-city communities.

Nationally, there are 668,267 businesses in the United States involved in the creation or distribution of the arts that employ 2.9 million people including visual artists, performing artists, managers, marketers, technicians, teachers, designers, carpenters, and workers in a wide variety of trades and professions. By direct grants and through allocations to each state, NEA dollars are distributed widely to strengthen the arts infrastructure and ensure broad access to the arts for communities across the country.

The NEA funds school-based and community-based programs that help children and youth acquire knowledge and understanding of, and skills in, the arts. The NEA also supports educational programs for adults, collaborations between state arts agencies and state education agencies, and partnerships between arts institutions and educators.

We understand fully the shared sacrifice that we all must make in order to help get our Nation's fiscal house in order. But funding for the National Endowment for the Arts was already reduced by \$12.5 million in FY11, and the FY12 Interior bill currently includes an additional \$20 million in funding cuts. We urge you to prevent any further reduction to the investment in our nation's arts and culture infrastructure when the Interior Appropriations bill is considered on the House floor.

Sincerely,

American Architectural Foundation, American Association of Museums, American Federation of Musicians, American Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works, American Music Center, Americans for the Arts, Association of Art Museum Directors, Association of Performing Arts Presenters, Chamber Music America, Chorus America, College Art Association, Dance/USA, Fractured Atlas, League of American Orchestras, Literary Network, Local Learning: The National Network for Folk Arts in Education, National Alliance for Media Arts & Culture, National Alliance for Musical Theatre, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, National Association of Latino Arts and Culture, National Council for the Traditional Arts, National Performance Network,

OPERA America, Performing Arts Alliance, Society for the Arts in Healthcare, Theatre Communications Group.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Representative David Cicilline (D-RI-1)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Rhode Island is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CICILLINE. In Congress, we have to, of course, responsibly cut spending, but at the same time we also have to make the necessary investments that create jobs now, guarantee the future strength of our economy, and renew the vitality of our communities. And that's why we should absolutely reject this effort to further reduce the investment, our Nation's investment, in the National Endowment for the Arts.

Our targeted Federal investment in the arts through the NEA is very modest and is really crucial to spurring the contributions of corporate and foundation partners through their support through philanthropy, sponsorships, and volunteerism that help to sustain and leverage arts investments in communities all across this country.

This investment in the arts becomes all the more important during a time when States and cities all across this country face greater and greater fiscal constraints and at the same time are searching for opportunities to leverage Federal dollars and to spur economic development and job creation.

I represent a State that has realized an extraordinary return on investments generated by the arts. In Rhode Island, the presence of the arts is really sown into the fabric of our communities and of our economy. According to recent data from Americans for the Arts, in just the First Congressional District, in my district alone, more than 1,400 arts-related businesses employ nearly 6,000 people, and that represents more than 5 percent of the businesses in my district.

As the former mayor of Providence, I've seen firsthand the economic impact of the arts and the power of art to transform people and places.

I know the benefits of the arts in enriching our communities and uniting them as well. Arts nourish our soul.

The United States Conference of Mayors sent a letter to Members of Congress urging us to protect funding in the arts and to reject this amendment, recognizing that arts create jobs and produce tax revenues, that arts put people to work, and that arts attract tourism revenue. Arts in the creative industries are an enormous part of what fuels our local economies, bringing hundreds of thousands of visitors to our cities, generating activity in restaurants, hotels, transportation, and hospitality services.

This activity not only strengthens the vitality of our communities, it generates revenues for State and local governments. Across our country, the arts industry provides much more than aesthetic benefits. It creates meaningful economic benefits and opportunities.

During this period of budget austerity, we shouldn't neglect those investments with a proven positive rate of return. We shouldn't siphon off the fuel that helps power the American arts industry, a sector of our economy comprised of more than 750,000 businesses, employing nearly 3 million people nationwide, and generating more than \$166 billion in economic activity.

Cutting the National Endowment for the Arts undermines our responsibility to create jobs and grow our economy, and diminishes us as a Nation.

As one study demonstrates, when we consider the overall direct Federal cultural spending of \$1.4 billion, we're achieving a return on investment that's nearly 9 to 1. If we're really serious about strengthening our economy, putting more Americans back to work, and reining in our deficit, then we have to be smart about our investments and about our reductions.

With estimates indicating that every dollar of Federal funds invested in the arts generates \$9 in economic benefits, further reductions to the National Endowment of the Arts are counterproductive and, in fact, will move our Nation backwards. It moves us backwards not only in the effect that we lose the immediate economic return on the investments, but this cut also pushes our country further behind our competitors and the global economy.

It was one of the great giants of the United States Senate, the great and passionate leadership of Rhode Island Senator Claiborne Pell, that led to the creation of the National Endowment for the Arts in 1965, the program that we're fighting to defend today. In 1963, Senator Pell opened hearings on preliminary legislation on this issue by stating, "I believe that this cause and its implementation has a worldwide application, for as our cultural life is enhanced and strengthened, so does it project itself into the world beyond our shores.

"Let us apply renewed energies to the very concepts we seek to advance, a true renaissance, the reawakening, the quickening, and above all, the unstunted growth of our cultural vitality."

In those words Senator Pell said clearly that this disinvestment that we're discussing today for the National Endowment for the Arts nearly 50 years later is a stark and appalling contrast to the renaissance and reawakening embodied in the National Endowment for the Arts.

For too long, the arts have been the first target for spending cuts in our public schools and here at the Federal level. It is at our own economic peril that we continue to deprive our youth and our communities of their connection to the arts.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

[Time: 21:30]

Mr. CICILLINE. I ask unanimous consent to be given 1 additional minute to conclude.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Rhode Island?

Mr. WALBERG. I object.

The Acting CHAIR. Objection is heard.

Representative Lynn Woolsey (D-CA-6)

Ms. WOOLSEY. I move to strike the last word, Mr. Chairman.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. As sure as Wednesday follows Tuesday, you can count on congressional Republicans to propose gutting programs benefiting the arts and humanities. It's as predictable as it is irresponsible and unwise. It's the same old penny-wise, pound-foolish approach we have come to expect from a party that wants to spend lavishly on corporate giveaways while cutting just about every initiative that empowers the American people and improves lives and our communities.

I can't believe that while the Nation stands on the brink of default, while Republican stubbornness puts us less than a week away from economic calamity, we're having a debate about funding for the arts that represents 3 cents, 3 cents for every \$100 of nonmilitary discretionary spending. Three cents, Mr. Chairman.

Believe me, the budget for the National Endowment for the Arts isn't breaking the bank. Grants to support museums and theater companies are not what caused a huge deficit, and cutting them will not put us on a fiscally responsible course. In fact, investments in the arts more than pay for themselves. For every \$1 spent on arts programs, the country gets back \$9 in economic benefit.

My friends on the other side of the aisle love to make arts funding a scapegoat. They never miss an opportunity to turn a spending debate into a culture war referendum on art. But let's be clear: The arts represent a vital economic industry, a mainstream employer of millions of Americans, and an integral part of a functioning society. The nonprofit arts sector generates more than \$12 billion in tax revenues and more than \$166 billion in economic activity every single year.

Communities that have a vibrant artistic life are magnets for tourism and new businesses that create jobs. There's also evidence that communities that embrace the arts tend to have higher real estate values, more civic activities and volunteerism, less crime, and lower poverty rates.

The arts are also a critical ingredient in the development of our children, with research showing that students receiving arts education perform better academically and are more likely to succeed in life.

But despite all the ways that arts support the common good, Republican leaders want to cut NEA. Instead, Mr. Chairman, I think it's time we cut Big Oil subsidies and cut loopholes for corporate jet owners. Arts programs have already taken a budget hit in recent years and are trying to do more with less. If we can give billions in subsidies to oil companies that are already raking in record profits, then surely we can maintain modest investments in the nonprofit arts sector that makes a vital contribution to American life.

Let's stop blaming small agencies for a fiscal crisis that was caused by three wars and tax cuts for the people who need them the least. Let's maintain robust funding for NEA.

With that, I yield the remainder of my time to the gentleman from Rhode Island.

Mr. CICILLINE. I thank the gentlewoman.

For too long the arts have been the first target for spending cuts in our public schools here at the Federal level. It is at our own economic peril that we continue to deprive our youth and our community of their connection to the arts. I have seen on so many occasions the power of music and dance and theater to ignite the imagination of a young person, that causes them to stay in school, to follow their passion, and ultimately to realize their dreams.

Today's global economy demands an even greater level of creativity, innovative thinking, and entrepreneurship, a 21st century skill set that is enhanced by exposure to the arts in learning and in daily life. I participated in an arts education roundtable with CEOs from all across the country who said that those skills of creative problem solving, of innovation, of entrepreneurship were skills they were looking for in the workers of the 21st century. And the arts nourishes and enhances those skills.

We cannot underestimate the importance of maintaining critical Federal funding for our arts to fuel our national economic recovery, to grow our local economies, to teach our children, and to expand our civic discourse during these trying economic times.

I strongly urge my colleagues to reject further reductions to the National Endowment for the Arts because now, more than ever, we need the National Endowment for the reawakening, quickening, and unstunted growth of not only our cultural vitality but of our economic prosperity as well.

Representative John Yarmuth (D-KY-3)

Mr. YARMUTH. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Kentucky is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Chairman, when we, in this House, decide how the taxpayers' money is going to be spent, it represents a statement of our values, a statement of our priorities. And the question of whether we should adequately fund the National Endowment for the Arts is one of those that speaks loudly to our values. It speaks loudly to our respect for the creative genius of human beings. It speaks loudly about our understanding of what the human soul is about.

We've heard much documentation of the economic impact of the arts throughout our country, \$165 billion annually in economic activity. I certainly can attest to the fact that in my community of Louisville, Kentucky, more than 20,000 of my constituents are involved actively, professionally in the arts. We are one of the only communities that has resident theater, resident opera, ballet, children's theater, a vibrant visual arts community. It is one of the things that significantly enhances the quality of life in my community. It's one of those things that brings people to my community. So the economic importance of the arts is undeniable.

But I ask again about our priorities. The amount of money that we're talking about now, roughly \$10 million over a period of years, we spent in the first few minutes of our activity in Libya. The first few Tomahawk missiles we launched there, that was \$10 million. We spend \$10 million in less than 1 hour in Afghanistan, less than 1 hour. So here we're talking about millions of jobs supported by funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, \$165 billion in economic activity, against all of the other things we do where there is so little payback for where we spend the taxpayers' money.

There are two things I would like to mention in addition to kind of the value-added aspects of arts funding.

If you think back over the history of mankind, what has survived of the great civilizations of this world? The only thing that has survived has been the creative product of the minds of men and women throughout history. Literature, music, architecture, paintings, sculpture, these are the only things that have survived.

If you look around this glorious room that we have the privilege of serving in--famous painting of George Washington, Lafayette, the architecture that's represented here--this is all the creative product of the men and women of generations. This is what our soul speaks to the world, to generations to come, and this is what we're talking about funding.

One of the greatest exports that we have from this country is our cultural product. We export music; we export film; we export drama, theater, all of these things, activities funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. So when we say to our taxpayers, our constituents, what are your values, we can say, you know, those Tomahawk missiles are wonderful.

And I certainly understand that we need to defend our country. But when we talk about our contributions to the history of mankind, humankind, it is undeniable that what we invest, the small amount we invest in supporting our creative genius, will be paid back many, many times over.

So I am proud to stand here and support funding for the National Endowment for the Arts, opposing the Walberg amendment, which would further cut the funding that has already been substantially reduced, and stand for the values of the millions and millions of men and women and children who not only participate in artistic activities, but also benefit immeasurably through an enhanced quality of life in our country.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Representative Rush Holt (D-NJ-12)

Mr. HOLT. I move to strike the requisite number of words.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, last month I gathered almost 200 individuals interested in the arts and humanities to discuss National Endowment for the Humanities and National Endowment for the Arts programs. The turnout was impressive. But considering their eagerness to win endowment grants, it was also a reminder of how tight funding is for these critical programs.

My friend, poet Paul Muldoon, read some poetry to the attendees and reminded all, in his words, the NEA and the NEH are not properly funded. It is a national disgrace. Now, that was before the amendment that is here tonight that would cut the NEA even further.

The NEA and the NEH help ensure a well-rounded education, and result in a well-rounded society. Now, of course the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities are different, but they are similar in what they bring to our Nation.

The arts and humanities inspire our children to explore their own creativity and encourage positive development in the course of their educational careers. The arts and humanities are a fundamental component of our society and they, indeed, warrant Federal funding. The arts and humanities help us know ourselves as a people.

Just a few weeks ago, here on this floor, the House approved a bill that increased the spending for the Department of Defense by \$17 billion. The total funding for the endowments is hardly more than a percent of that increase in defense spending that was passed. Talk about misplaced priorities.

I'm reminded of the often told exchange between Scientist Robert Wilson, the Director of Fermilab, when he was testifying before the Senate and Senator Pastore. The Senator asked, with regard to a science experiment at Fermilab, whether it would help defend this country against the Soviet Union. Replied Dr. Wilson, no, Senator Pastore, this will not help defend us against the Soviet Union, but it will help make our country more worth defending.

This amendment is based on the premise that arts and humanities are a luxury. The author of this amendment to cut the NEA further says America is impoverished. Mr. Chairman, I'll tell you what would leave America really impoverished is if we strangle the arts and humanities.

We've heard what the arts contribute to our economy. The Americans for the Arts, in its report, Arts and Economic Prosperity, details that the arts support more than 5 million jobs and generate tens of billions of dollars in government revenue.

Arts are good for our cultural development, yes. They are good for our society at large and good for our economic development as well.

I've heard from a number of my constituents on this matter, and nearly everyone has pleaded with me to preserve as much funding as possible for the arts and for the humanities. As one of them said poignantly, "A Nation without culture is a Nation without a soul."

I strongly oppose this amendment and other efforts to strangle the arts and humanities in America and to defund the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA-3)

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment. Our focus today ought to be on jobs. And as some of my colleagues have already said, funding the arts creates jobs. For negligible investments, we create lots of jobs, because not only are the arts supported, but when you have artistic programs, restaurants and other activities generate jobs all over the community.

And our focus ought to be on education. Those children, for example, who are involved in of the arts, do better in school.

Now we're trying to cut funding for the arts in this amendment, and we cannot ignore why all these cuts are necessary. Last December we passed a tax cut of \$800 billion, \$400 billion a year. Now, we're looking to make cuts. Most of the projections are that we need \$4 trillion over the next 10 years in deficit reduction, \$400 billion a year. I hope we don't ignore the fact that that's the same number, \$400 billion tax cuts a year, and now we're looking for \$400 billion spending cuts a year.

So when we talk about cutting the arts, when we talk about cutting Social Security and Medicare and education and everything else, we cannot ignore the fact that all of these cuts are designed to preserve the tax cuts that we passed last December. And so to preserve those tax cuts--many are going to millionaires, multimillionaires, and oil companies--we find ourselves having to deal with this amendment to cut the arts.

Mr. Chairman, we should not be lulled into accepting caps. Caps just delay the inevitable because caps don't cut anything today. But when you start appropriating under the caps, in a few weeks or a few months, we'll find that there's not enough money for the arts, there's not enough money for Head Start, there's not enough money for education or Social Security or Medicare. So when you accept the caps, you're ultimately going to make these cuts.

We don't have any crisis today, Mr. Chairman, because some don't want to increase the debt ceiling. The debt ceiling is a perfunctory responsibility of this Congress. We've already spent the money. The debt ceiling just acknowledges what we've already done. We need to just pass the debt ceiling and get back to the regular order where we make choices.

Do we want to cut Social Security and Medicare and the arts in order to preserve tax cuts, many going to the oil companies and multimillionaires? I hope not, and we should begin by defeating this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Representative Betty McCollum (D-MN-3)

Ms. *McCOLLUM*. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Minnesota is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. *McCOLLUM*. Mr. Chair, in Minnesota we understand that the arts are an essential part of our economy and the number of jobs it creates. The arts are so vital to our economy and our development and civic life that in 2008, Minnesotans voted to amend our State constitution to raise money, yes, to tax themselves and dedicate part of the revenue to the arts.

Minnesota is the only State in the country where there's a dedicated public funding source for the arts. In our Constitution, Mr. Chair, we passed a legacy amendment. Hunters, anglers, conservationists, parents, seniors, all came together to say the arts, along with preserving our environment, is integral to our legacy, to our way of life in Minnesota.

In my district alone, the arts employ over 8,000 people. And the arts and the culture industry contributes over \$830 million to Minnesota's economy. Investing in the arts makes economic sense, and it's good public policy.

As has been pointed out, for every dollar that is spent by the NEA, \$9 in economic activity is generated. We must make tough choices, given this fiscal crisis, and I believe the NEA's budget has been targeted and it has been shrunk enough.

The NEA's budget has been cut 20 percent since 2010. Our artists, poets, writers, musicians, producers, sculptors, singers, dancers, photographers, and actors contribute millions of dollars to our local economy and create a vibrant social space for us to come together. And we hear time and time again from the major corporations and from the start-up companies, from computer companies to health care companies to our universities that it is American creativity and space for the arts that allows America to move forward.

So I strongly oppose this cut, and I reject any further attacks on the NEA's budget.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Representative James Moran (D-VA-8)

Mr. MORAN. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Chairman, you've heard it. I will explain: I rose previously to claim the time in opposition, now I am rising to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, if this was not such a late hour, we would have had five or six times as many Members rising in opposition to this amendment. And I trust they reflect the general sentiment of the country.

Winston Churchill, at the height of World War II, was told by his budget director that to conserve money for armaments, they needed to cut the arts. And he turned to him and said, If we do that, what is it that we're fighting for?

The arts reflect the highest aspirations of our humanity. And in fact, in this country, they're a reflection of the true American spirit--our talent, our ability to communicate, our ability to relate to one another.

Now, let me be specific about what this amendment would do, because every single Member of this body has a direct grant from the National Endowment for the Arts going to that congressional district. If this amendment were to pass, more than \$100 million in non-Federal matching funds for NEA awards would be lost. The number of Americans reached as a result will decline by 36 million compared to the number of Americans reached by NEA this year. The number of children and youth will decline by 3.6 million, and in fact there will be a near-17 percent decrease in State and regional partnerships.

I think if the Members fully consider the impact of this, they will realize this is one of the most effective Federal Government programs that we have. We have a gentleman whose name is Rocco Landesman. He could be making considerably more than he's making today in income, but he has chosen to devote his time and attention to leading the National Endowment for the Arts. In fact, he has suggested that, given the fiscal situation that confronts us, perhaps we should reduce the number of platforms for artists so as to save money. But he is determined not to reduce the quality of artistic performance in this country.

We have so many talented people, so much potential, and it is the NEA that reaches out and finds that potential all over the country. This is a fully national program. Every single congressional district benefits from grants from the NEA. And those grants expand the economy, the focus of the grant, multiple times--I'm trying to recall the number, I think it's five or six times at a minimum, many times 10, 20 times--the amount of money that is contributed to a particular artistic focus when the NEA decides that it's worthy of getting a grant.

They have maintained their credibility. In fact, when they were under attack in the 1990s, they made sure that every grant passes a very high level of scrutiny. Even though I think most of us don't believe in censorship, they understand all the competing political pressures. They have navigated those political waters. The Our Town program that the chairman of the subcommittee referred to is a terrific program. It really develops the best of what America is all about.

This has been a long night. We have tried to fight the good fight over here against any number of efforts to cut programs, to repeal legislation; but this is one of the most important.

I would urge this body to reject this amendment, to show our support for the National Endowment for the Arts, and really for the phenomenal artistic talent that it underscores and generates in this country.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.