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Setting the Record Straight:

Non Profit Performing Arts Organizations Are Essential Contributors to the American Economy

Amendment prohibits funding to the arts in the Economic Stimulus Bill

THE ISSUE: Senator Tom Coburn's (R-OK) amendment prohibiting any funds in the Economic Stimulus Bill from going to arts and cultural institutions has passed, but can be reversed in the Conference Committee. The \$50 million for national arts organizations to be distributed by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) passed the House, but not the Senate, and can be reinstated in Committee.

Why are non profit arts organizations perceived as somehow not contributing to the national economy, when nothing could be further from the truth?

THE FACTS: Non profit arts organizations and their audiences generate **\$166.2 billion** in economic activity each year;

Support **5.7 million jobs**;

Return nearly **\$30 billion** in government revenue each year;

Non profit theatres are feeling the weight of this economic recession. People have already been laid off, performances have been canceled and some organizations have closed. If the goal is to save or create 4 million jobs, why not save these? After all, attending a performance most likely includes additional revenue going to restaurants, parking lots, airlines, hotel rooms, gift shops, concession stands and babysitters.

THE QUESTIONS: Why isn't an electrician who works for a non profit theatre as much of a contributor to the economy as an electrician who works for the private sector? Why is it not recognized that artists pay mortgages, buy food and gas and pay taxes?

THE ANSWER: Get as many Americans as possible to contact their legislators insisting that additional funding for the non profit performing arts field (through the NEA) be included in the Economic Stimulus Bill. Go to www.theperformingartsalliance.org

TCG executive director Teresa Eyring is available for print, radio and television interviews as are her colleagues at the Performing Arts Alliance