



## Update

# Greetings!

Things are about to move. Quickly.

## National Update

The federal fiscal year begins each October 1. Funding of the [National Endowment for the Arts](#) (NEA), [National Endowment for the Humanities](#) (NEH), and the [Corporation for Public Broadcasting](#) (CPB) is secure through September 2018 if current resolutions persist.

### What to Expect

The president is scheduled to reveal a first round budget proposal (commonly dubbed the "skinny budget") in the next few days. Current signals indicate that the NEA, NEH, and CPB will be part of this presentation. [Americans for the Arts](#) (AFTA) anticipates three possibilities, with advocacy strategies for each.

The budget may outline

1. full funding (based on historical patterns)
2. partial funding
3. zero funding

We are watching for news, and may connect with you soon. Participation in AFTA's efforts will be an important way to add your voice to this national conversation -- we will urge to do so.

## National Arts Advocacy Day

A record number of national arts advocates will head for Washington for [National Arts Advocacy Day](#) (March 20-21). Schedules are set for visits to the offices of Senators Patrick Leahy and Bernie Sanders and Representative Peter Welch. If you would like to be part of this national effort, register on the Arts Advocacy Day webpage and contact [Zon Eastes](#) with questions.

## State Update

Likewise, the push for budgets is on here in Vermont.

1. Arts Council appropriation. The Arts Council gave testimony before the **House** Appropriations Committee on Wednesday, February 15. This committee recommends budgets for hundreds of agencies. Now, the Council's appropriation will come under review by the **Senate** Appropriations Committee. Leadership from the Arts Council expects to testify before the Senate Appropriations Committee in the next ten days.

If the House and Senate Committee recommendations are equal, that figure moves into the budget for final approval. If they differ, expect us to urge you to contact members of the Appropriations Committee of Conference, the body that will forge a final compromise on the overall budget.

2. Insertion of arts and culture language into Act 186. Act 186 is the bill calling for indicators and measures (Results-Based Accountability [RBA] language) in support of eight broad outcomes. The Arts Council is currently in strategic planning mode, developing strategies and language intended to contribute to state RBA population-level outcomes.

3. Ensure the arts are a part of every Vermont student's education. Council staff meets regularly with staff from the Agency of Education (AOE), preparing to position Vermont for the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act. In Vermont, the public hearing portion of the [plan's development process](#) closed in February, a draft proposal is before Governor Scott this month. The AOE anticipates submitting a state plan to the U.S. Department of Education in April.

## What You Can Do

### Soon

Watch for upcoming action alerts, at both the state and national levels.

### Any Time

Research indicates that the most effective advocacy efforts are face-to-face: stories supported by clear data. And these efforts work throughout the year, not only during a legislative session. Build a relationship. Direct contact is not always possible; other ways of connecting are also important:

1. join advocacy campaigns. Get engaged in national issues at the [Arts Action Fund](#). Watch for state actions at the Council's [Action Center](#)
2. contact your elected officials by phone or email. By phone, be prepared to speak briefly about your issue. In either case, aim to be clear and direct (legislators are very busy). You can find your legislator's contact information at the Arts Council's [Action Center](#) (use the upper right hand box: Find Officials)
3. invite your elected officials to local/regional group meetings – forums, discussions, even breakfast. These are especially effective outside the legislative session. Contact [Zon Eastes](#) for ideas and contacts in your area

Be in touch. Every voice makes a difference!

All best--

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zon Eastes', written in a cursive style.

**Zon Eastes**

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