



## Update

# Greetings!

## National Update

Early this month, Congress approved a spending plan for the current fiscal year. The budget, now signed by President Trump, includes a \$2M increase for the [National Endowment for the Arts](#) (NEA). **This is celebratory news!** The budget also includes positive outcomes for the [National Endowment for the Humanities](#) (NEH), the [Corporation for Public Broadcasting](#) (CPB), and the [Institute of Museums and Library Services](#). We can be heartened by the expanding bi-partisan support for national cultural agency funding, and we Vermonters should regularly applaud the valiant support of our national cohort.

Now the process for the FY2018 budget begins. The President's complete budget proposal is expected May 23. In more normal years, this proposal comes in late February or early March. This proposal, like his earlier 'skinny' budget proposal is just that: a proposal that starts the process that results in a federal budget. The new fiscal year opens on October 1.

Many issues face the nation at this moment; we will continue to focus on advocacy for the cultural aspects and keep you apprised.

## State Update

Budget negotiations extended the legislative session beyond expected closing dates.

1. Arts Council appropriation. The Council's appropriation, like many budget items this year, was level funded, at \$675,307. The Council is in the midst of making its own spending decisions now. The Council board is expected to approve the FY2018 budget in early June. Thank you to those advocated for the arts and creativity during this session.

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 board recently appointed a task force to complete the strategic planning process for the next three years. RBA language will be included in the plan. Final stages include a public input period, final edits, and adoption by the full board.

3. Ensure the arts are a part of every Vermont student's education. No advocacy actions to report this month.

### **What You Can Do**

Although the legislative session will soon close, you can still connect with your elected officials. The most effective advocacy efforts are face-to-face: stories supported by clear data. Build an open, direct relationship. Invite your elected officials to local/regional group meetings – forums, discussions, arts events, or even breakfast. Contact [Zon Eastes](#) for ideas and contacts in your area.

Be in touch. Every voice makes a difference!

All best--



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