



Update

Greetings!

National Update

Tax Reform

Last week, the Ways and Means Committee passed the House version of a tax reform bill. Discussion was decidedly partisan and no amendments proposed by Democrats were accepted. This bill is expected go to the floor for a vote from the House this week. The Senate has not yet released their version of a tax reform bill. Changes to the tax code are expected to affect the entire creative sector:

- The estate tax earning exemption would be doubled in the first year and then permanently repealed over the next five years. Decades of research show this exemption is a strong incentive for taxpayers to plan major gifts to charities
- The Artist-Museum Partnership Act has no vehicle to enter the current discussion. House Republicans are pushing to get their bill out of committee, onto the House floor, and over to the Senate
- State and local property tax deductions would be capped at \$10,000
- The Joint Committee on Taxation released data showing that charitable giving will drop off significantly if this tax plan goes through as is. This could be a \$13B annual loss to nonprofits

Take Action! Contact our national legislative cohort and encourage them to stand firm on tax reform. Your voice adds strength to their work. Use the AFTA [Action Center](#) (Americans for the Arts) to send messages in support of protections for charitable giving. (The [Vermont Arts Council's Action Center](#) is linked tightly with AFTA advocacy webpages. In other words: There are multiple ways to get to the same place.)

FY2018 Appropriations

There has been no movement on federal appropriations since last month's report. The House Interior Appropriations for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities stands at \$145M for FY2018. The Senate has yet to release an appropriations bill. The only hard deadline at this point is December 8 (when the continuing resolution runs out for FY2017). Congress will need to pass appropriations bills by then or have another continuing resolution.

State News

FY2019 Appropriations

Earlier this month, Executive Director Karen Mittelman met with representatives of the department of finance and management to open the discussion about the ways that level funding for the Arts Council places pressure on programs and services. That conversation informs construction of the governor's budget, which will be presented in January, soon after the opening of the 2017-18 legislative session.

Outcomes from the Creative Network Summit

The Vermont Creative Network Summit took place at the State House on November 8 and 9. The Summit was designed to develop next step actions in three broad, statewide policy areas: investment, identity, and infrastructure. A task force was created to move each issue forward, and Summit participants identified key next steps for each. More information will be available on the [Network's website](#) in the coming weeks. Thanks to all who participated, and special thanks to workshop and plenary presenters for helping to enliven and advance the discussion.

Advocacy: What You Can Do

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 [Karen Mittelman](#), the Council's new executive director, for ideas and contacts in your area.

Be in touch. Every voice makes a difference!

All best --



Zon Eastes

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