



Update

Greetings!

National Update

Budget

Congressional leaders' failure to reach agreement on the budget led to a partial shutdown of the federal government earlier this month. The budget stalemate, which closed federal agencies — including the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities — for only one day, ended when Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) extending federal funding until February 8.

The National Endowment for the Arts continues to be funded at its current level (\$150 million) while budget negotiations continue. A longer-term appropriations bill is expected to be introduced soon. With a new deadline looming, Congress will need to either quickly reach agreement on the budget or pass another short-term CR to keep the government open.

Hanging in the balance is a contentious vote on immigration policy, which is also expected to be scheduled in the next few weeks.

Arts Advocacy Day 2018: Raise Your Voice for the Arts!

On March 12 and 13, arts advocates from across the nation will convene in Washington, D.C. for the annual Arts Advocacy Day. Organized by Americans for the Arts in partnership with other national associations, the event brings together hundreds of activists and representatives from cultural organizations to demonstrate support for federal funding for the arts.

Registration for Arts Advocacy Day is [open now](#). This is a great opportunity to network with fellow arts activists, share strategies, and learn how to make your case to members of Congress that art matters.

State News

FY2019 Appropriations

Last week, Governor Scott outlined his budget for the coming fiscal year. The proposed budget of nearly \$3.9 billion represents an increase of \$82 million over last year's spending. In his January 23 budget address, the governor emphasized economic growth, workforce development, and plans to attract new residents to Vermont.

The FY2019 budget recommends level funding for the Vermont Arts Council. Our sister agency, the Vermont Humanities Council, was also level funded. We will continue to advocate for robust state and federal support for arts and culture, while at the same time endeavoring to spend our resources to have the greatest impact.

Advocacy: What You Can Do

Tell your story. Speak to your local senator or representative about why the arts and creativity matter to you. Find your legislator on the [Council's Action Center](#) or on the [general assembly website](#).

We all have stories about the power of the arts to transform individual lives and communities. Sharing a personal story from your own experience brings home the point that investment in the arts makes a difference in Vermont communities.

Your voice matters!

Thank you for all you do.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Mittelman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent flourish at the end.

Karen Mittelman
Executive Director

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