

Orchestras Wake Up to the 104th Congress

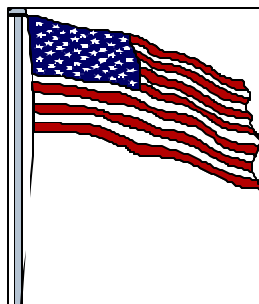
by Andrew Brandt, ROPA President

Last summer, many of us looked at the budget battles in Congress about the National Endowment for the Arts with concern but still had some confidence that the supporters of the arts would come through, as they always have for the past thirty years. For the most part, they did. The budget was cut 2%, but that didn't seem to be great cause for dismay, since the NEA budget has gone up and down over the years by more than that.

Then came the Republican "Contract with America," followed by the November elections and, suddenly, all of the assumptions we had made for many years about government funding for the arts were dashed to bits by a wave of new Republican representatives and senators. In the U.S. House of Representatives, Congressional freshmen with no track record in their support for public funding of the arts and humanities replaced 52 strong and 20 moderate supporters of the NEA. Some candidates had actually campaigned against NEA funding! Then we began hearing from Republican leaders like Newt Gingrich and Dick Armey (House Republican leader) who were talking about not just reducing support for the arts and humanities, but cutting entire federal programs like the NEA, National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the Institute of Museum Studies (IMS), the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (which helps fund National Public Radio and the Public Broadcasting System), as well as the Smithsonian Institute and the Kennedy Center in Washington. They were cheered on by several ultra-conservative columnists and media personalities. Even worse is that, in their public statements, these

leaders seem to have little knowledge of what these programs do and how they do it, and it appears that they don't care to learn.

There is no clear consensus in Congress on funding for the arts or removing funding, but if freshmen and other Congressional representatives do not begin hearing from constituents soon, and hearing them loudly, they will have no reason to not follow their leaders and vote to cut these cultural agencies. That is why it is important for every member of ROPA, every board member of a ROPA orchestra, and every audience member who appreciates our product, to write a letter, make a phone call, send a telegram or fax, or pass out a flyer asking the public for their support. The time for apathy or letting somebody else do it is long gone. We must take



There is no clear consensus in Congress on funding for the arts

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What You Can Do

1. Write letters to your U.S. Congressional Representatives and Senators. Don't know who they are or what their addresses are? Check with your local library or newspaper for their names and local addresses. Have someone in your orchestra call the AFM BBS for the latest version of the House and Senate directory or see the instructions under "Getting Started." Faxes and phone calls are also helpful. Don't have time? Call 900/370-9000 and tell them to send a message to your representatives.
2. Letter-writing isn't a one time thing. Check ROPA bulletins and the media for up-dates on the campaign and action alerts. (Giving the ROPA Secretary a fax number will also help us send you info in a timely manner.) Also, have somebody call the AFM BBS regularly for updates.
3. Talk to your orchestra's managers and Board members about lobbying for the NEA and how it's important for your orchestra and all the country's musicians, artists, actors, sculptors, writers and public broadcasters. The American Symphony Orchestra League has already sent out information asking them to support the fight to save the NEA and, if your Executive Director or manager attended the ASOL mid-winter meeting, they have already discussed the ASOL initiative.
4. Pass out leaflets to your audiences asking them to contact their Congressional representatives and to tell them to support funding for the NEA, NEH and public broadcasting. If appropriate, also explain how your musicians already donate broadcast rights for hundreds of hours of programming on your local NPR station. The exposure that those broadcasts give is also important in marketing your orchestra.
5. Talk to your local newspaper's editorial staff. Write an op-ed piece or letter to the editor stating why you

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Orchestras

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action now!

What's at risk?

Naturally, when it comes to government funding of the arts, the first question a musician asks is, "What's in it for us?" Elsewhere in this issue is a chart showing direct grants to all the ROPA and ICSOM orchestras from the NEA. Unlike charts previously released by the ASOL and others, this chart includes grants made to our opera and ballet companies and the few Challenge grants recently given to symphony orchestras. ROPA orchestras and opera and ballet companies are receiving a little over \$1.25 million dollars directly from the NEA. ICSOM members get much more, over \$7 million.

This chart does not give the full picture, though. About 35% of the NEA's budget is sent directly to the states for them to distribute. State agencies, in turn, often give money to regional, county and even municipal arts councils. This NEA money has strings attached, but it's probably fair to say that if your orchestra gets money from your state, regional or other arts councils, a certain percentage of that also came from the NEA. Therefore, an estimate around \$9 million or more of NEA support for just ROPA and ICSOM orchestras is probably realistic. It is unlikely that our industry could quickly replace a loss of \$9 million from non-government sources.

What would happen to states' arts councils if the NEA is lost? The NEA and NEH are the keystones of arts funding throughout the nation. Many state arts councils wouldn't exist if it wasn't for the NEA. In theory, the states could increase funding for their councils to make up that difference. In practical terms, however, it looks like Congress will continue to shift responsibilities and their costs to the states. Even if Congress passes prohibitions against unfunded mandates, states will be forced to create new programs and fund new expenditures. Most states will not be able to raise taxes to fund these programs, so they will be looking for other places to

cut. If the NEA is lost, that will be a clear signal to many state houses to consider cutting their arts funding, too.

A case in point: the governor of Virginia has already proposed cutting its already small state arts council budget in half.

So what happens when both federal and state funding for the arts is cut or eliminated? Where do we look for help? The obvious answers are our audiences, corporate sponsors and philanthropic groups. Remember, though, that when your board member or manager goes to a donor or philanthropy to ask for funds, they will now be competing with every other arts organization who had

"Victory is finally within our reach. If the Republicans are serious about balancing the budget, they have to make choices about getting rid of the NEA and NEH." -Tom Kilgannon, communications director of the Christian Action Network.

their federal and state grants cut, and possibly your public radio and TV stations, too. Also, if Congress cuts welfare and other social safety nets, philanthropic organizations will also be asked for support for social programs,

literacy programs, medical care for the poor, education, and many other needs. Competition for funding will be fierce. Replacing NEA and state funding quickly from the private sector will probably be impossible.

I therefore have two scenarios for what could happen if NEA funding is substantially cut or eliminated. The best case scenario calls for very difficult negotiations, strikes and bankruptcies as many orchestras try to completely reorganize their funding base and spending priorities. Other orchestras, already in borderline shape, will go out of business. Some orchestras will eliminate some or all full-time positions

for part-time per-service jobs, and others will push hard for wage cuts. The surviving orchestras will cut out educational programs, outreach programs, and rural and inner-city programs. Note that this is my *best* case scenario.

In my WORST case scenario, we will end the century with professional symphony orchestras in only about 30-50 major cities in the U.S. and only about a half dozen professional ballet and opera companies in the country. Many large areas — possibly even entire states — will be

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Getting Started

Call Now...

Don't have time to write a letter now? Make a quick phone call instead. Dial:
900/370-9000.

This number has been set up by the American Arts Alliance with the support of the ASOL. After a brief recording (during which you are not billed), they will read you a message, ask you if you want to send it, then take your name, address, and phone number and send a mailgram supporting the NEA, the NEH, and the Institute of Museum Studies, which will be delivered within 72 hours. You have the option of getting a copy of the message. The 900 number charge will be \$1.99/minute, charged on your phone bill. The call should take 3-4 minutes.

Is the line busy? That's no excuse. You can still call The Cultural Advocacy Campaign Hotline at:

800/651-1575.

The operator will send three Western Union mailgrams to be hand-delivered to your Congressional Representative and two Senators. The cost will be \$9.50. This is also billed to your home phone.

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unserved by professional classical music or by public radio and TV. There will be a loss of music and arts programs at every level of public and private education and the loss of hundreds of thousands of creative people of every stripe to our economy and our national culture.

So if you need an apocalypse to get you to do something to support the NEA, this sounds pretty darn close to me.

What happens now?

The "Contract with America," which Republicans want to pass in the first hundred days of the 104th Congress, includes a provision to support the Penny/Kasich Amendment, which failed by a narrow 6-vote margin last year (219-213). This amendment calls for a 2% budget cut each year for five years for the NEA, NEH, CPB, Smithsonian Institute and the National Gallery of Art. It also calls for elimination of funding for the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Not incidentally, John Kasich (R-OH), who co-authored the amendment, is the new Chair of the House Budget Committee. Right now this is the most generous proposal being considered by the House of Representatives.

Soon after the 104th Congress began in January, Newt Gingrich led Congress in cutting all funding to Congressional Caucuses and Legislative Service Organizations. Among the caucuses eliminated was the Congressional Arts

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Then Write:

Congressfolk have their offices in one of several buildings in Washington. However, you need not know their address to send them mail. Letters to your Representative can be addressed:

The Honorable [name]
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0001

Similarly, letters to your Senators can simply be addressed:

The Honorable [name]
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510-0001

A complete directory the 104th Congress

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Caucus, which had played a significant, bipartisan role in countering misinformation campaigns regarding the arts.

The immediate battle, probably begun by the time you read this, is over rescinding money already budgeted to the NEA in last summer's contentious debates. This process of **rescission** would deal with the budget for Fiscal Year 1995 (FY95), which is the fiscal year for which our orchestras are currently applying for grants.

The next battle will be over **reauthorization** for the NEA. In theory, all federal agencies need to be reauthorized every year. In practice, Congress often offers a continuing resolution to keep the current agencies in place, and then it debates how much to budget. Republican leaders have stated that every agency will have to be reauthorized after examining how well that

"I personally would privatize all of them." -Newt Gingrich, when asked about the future of the endowments and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

agency fulfills new platforms outlined in the "Contract with America," including: federalism, family values, privatization and advocating less government. Opponents of the NEA will try to prevent reauthorization, thereby eliminating the NEA completely.

If reauthorized, then the debate on how well to fund the NEA will begin in earnest for FY96. Thus, it is likely that the next six months will provide three major hurdles for the NEA: rescission, reauthorization and budgeting. Although these battles have begun, it also gives us a few months to organize before the final funding battles are complete.

Therefore, the ROPA Executive Board presents you, our members, with our organization's first political action campaign. Other articles in this issue of *The Leading Tone* will explain what you can do to help in this political battle, and some of the arguments you can make. This project is consistent with the goals that ROPA Delegates outlined in their five year plan at the 1993 ROPA Conference. We hope to coordinate this campaign with ICSOM, the American Federation of Musicians, the AFL-CIO and other arts advocates.

Laura Ross, the ROPA Secretary, will be mailing ROPA Delegates an Advocacy Kit from the American Arts Alliance, one of many groups active in the fight to save the NEA and other federal arts/broadcasting programs.

Your orchestra committee or an ad hoc political action committee in your orchestra and/or local should examine this Advocacy Kit carefully. We also hope to keep in touch with many other organizations who are also concerned with saving the NEA, a list of which can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

Like any grass-roots campaign, this effort will fail if you, the members of ROPA, do not participate. Influencing the will of Congress is no easy task. You will have to contact your managements, your board members, and your audiences to enlist their support. This is not the type of thing your elected leaders on the Orchestra Committee, your AFM local, or in ROPA can do for you. We need everybody's help.

But the battle is not impossible. Many Republicans (and Democrats) still support government funding for the arts. Each of our states' fifty arts councils have bipartisan support, as do the arts councils in every one of our nation's largest fifty cities. Remember, your orchestra's Board of Directors has many Republicans, many of which give generously to Republican candidates and know how to make their voices heard. Another advantage is simply the success that the NEA has had over the past thirty years in bringing the arts to every constituency in the USA, including rural America, the inner-city, minority institutions, school children, and the varied audiences that come to the many different classical, pops, family, chamber music, opera, ballet and choral concerts that you present. Add these voices to those of many columnists, political pundits, politicians, lobbying groups, and arts support groups (many of which I only recently learned existed), and you have a potentially powerful, influential majority of the country. After all, that's what democracy is all about. It's time we quit watching and became participants in governing our country.

The Top Ten Reasons for Supporting Arts Funding

Many arts advocates believe that the following points will work effectively in the current political climate. You can use these arguments in letters to the editor and op-ed pieces. Customize these arguments with local economic figures and stories. In each case, emphasize the role of the NEA and other federal agencies in your projects. (Source: The National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies.)

1. **The NEA is a great investment in the economic growth of every community in this country.** The \$167 million invested in the NEA by the federal government becomes seed money for state and local governments and nonprofit arts organizations to use to leverage almost 11 times that amount to produce high quality arts programs.

2. **The NEA stimulates local economies throughout the country.** The NEA supports programs that enhance community development and promote cultural planning. The arts stimulate business development, spur urban renewal, attract new businesses, and improve the overall quality of life in our cities and towns. The arts also attract people to the city to spend dollars in conjunction with attending arts performances.

3. **The nonprofit arts industry generates \$36.8 billion annually in economic activity.** From large urban to small rural communities, the nonprofit arts industry has a measurable impact on the treasuries at the federal, state and local level. The nonprofit arts industry returns \$3.4 billion in federal income taxes; \$1.2 billion in state government revenue, and \$790 million in local government revenue.

4. **The nonprofit arts industry supports 1.3 million jobs annually.** That equals 1 percent of the entire U.S. workforce with a total of \$25.2 billion in wages paid.

5. **The arts attract new tourism dollars—the fastest growing economic market in the country today.** Cultural tourism is repeatedly cited by visitors as the leading reason for visiting a community.

6. **The arts and humanities enjoy bipartisan support at the federal, state and local level.** Highlight examples in

your community and state where bipartisan support for PUBLIC funding for the arts exist. Every state and all of the nation's largest 50 cities support arts funding for their residents.

7. **The NEA ensures accessibility to the arts for everyone – rich, middle-class or poor – to enjoy and participate.** The NEA helps make the arts affordable to all Americans, including those in the schools, in inner-cities, and in rural areas.

8. **The NEA is responsible for building the cultural infrastructure of our country.** Over the last 30 years, the NEA has nurtured a healthy infrastructure of cultural institutions to grow in order to better serve the needs of each unique community. In 30 years, the number of state and territorial arts councils increased from 5 to 56; the number of local arts councils grew from 600 to 3,800; the number of professional orchestras increased from 110 to 230; the number of nonprofit theater companies increased from 56 to

425; the number of dance companies grew from 37 to 450; and the number of opera companies grew from 27 to 120.

9. **There is a need to maintain a strong federal, state and local partnership.** A tremendous domino effect would occur if the federal government's role in public funding for the arts were to dramatically change. A delicate balance exists in public support for the arts among all three levels of government.

10. **The arts are an investment in our children and families.** Each year, the NEA opens a door to the arts to millions of school children, including at-risk youth. It has been proven that the arts improve overall student learning, instill self-esteem and discipline, and provide creative outlets for self-expression. The arts also help prepare America's children for the future workforce.

Did You Know...

- In the New York-New Jersey region, a 1992 study found that the total economic impact by the arts was \$9.8 billion. Almost \$3.5 billion in wages, salaries and royalties were generated in this region in 1992, a ten percent increase over a decade earlier.
- A comparative study of direct government support for the arts showed that Sweden spends \$35 per capita on the arts; France and Canada \$32; the Netherlands \$29; Germany \$27. The U.S. spends between 60 and 70¢.
- The NEA's current appropriation of \$167.4 million is smaller than the operating budget of New York's Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, which is \$316 million this year.
- Some argue for safeguards against "obscene" works of art. We already have them. There are laws against obscenity in this country. No NEA-sponsored project has ever been found by the courts to be obscene but, if one was, the artist would be required to refund his entire grant to the NEA and forfeit subsequent NEA support.
- Out of over 100,000 NEA grants, only about 20 of them have been controversial. Compare that against any other government agency!
- The Corporation for Public Broadcasting currently receives \$285.6 million a year, from which it funds NPR and PBS. PBS receives 14% of its budget from federal funds and NPR only 3%, the remainder coming from corporations and individuals.
- A recent Louis Harris poll showed that 60% of the respondents supported federal funding of the arts. 55% of those polled said they'd be willing to INCREASE their taxes by \$15 or more to support funding for the arts.
- The current NEA budget represents less than 1/200 of 1% of the federal budget.

Counsel's Comments

by John Schulman

ROPA's President and officers are to be congratulated for this issue of the *Leading Tone*, which presents a very timely compilation of information. The actions you are called upon to take in this issue are protected by law. Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act has always ensured the right of employees to organize and bargain collectively and also, to take other action for their "mutual aid and protection". Over many decades of precedent and in many circumstances "mutual aid and protection" has been understood to include political activity. So feel free to start now!

I have had the privilege of lobbying as an amateur and a paid professional with regard to arts issues and other issues. One lesson taught by experience is the value of *personal contact* with the political figure involved or sometimes, as importantly, with the staff person or persons in charge of advising on the issues involved. So, please write and call but also, send a representative from your orchestra quickly to the local office of every member of Congress and senator, and next, to every local elected official concerned with the arts or arts funding. Then follow up on a planned regular basis.

Remember that union funds may not be used directly for political contributions. There are, however, no such restrictions on personal contributions or contributions through a Political Action Committee such as the Federation's TEMPO-PAC. Those who are able should consider helping political friends who stand up for the arts in this time of crisis.

A final piece of advice is to use your special talent. Make a political statement, where and when you can, with your music as the centerpiece. That is what it is all about. Good luck!

What You Can Do

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support funding for the NEA. Talk to the news editors of your local NPR stations. They want to support you, but need a news angle.

6. Talk to people in other arts groups in your area. Work together with your

"My own view of the matter is the National Endowment for the Arts offends the Constitution of the United States. My own view is there is no constitutional authority for it to exist." -Representative Dick Armey (R-TX), Majority Leader in the House.

Board and managers to be the leaders in building a coalition of local music, theater, dance, opera, choruses, choir and arts groups. Your local arts council can help you find contacts. Once you get the artists together, find ways to reach out to the media, public service groups, businesses and local politicians to enlist them in the project.

7. Ask highly visible people (Board members, business leaders, leaders of the Chamber of Commerce and tourism bureaus, and local and state politicians) to talk to your Representatives and Senators one-on-one to ask them specifically to support for the NEA. Sometimes the person asking is as important as what they are asking for.

8. Check with your Representative's and Senator's local offices and see when he or she will be in town. Plan a meeting between your group and your local Congressman and Senator to discuss why you support the NEA.

9. Build a phone/fax tree for your orchestra and for other area arts supporters. This will help you create a rapid-response team of phone, fax and letter creators.

10. Let ROPA know what you are doing. Delegates can pass on news to members-at-large and to the ROPA Vice-President, Secretary and President. Call Pres. Brandt immediately if your state governor or legislator proposes to cut your state arts council. We may be able to coordinate our campaigns.

11. Be creative. Many arts groups in Northeastern Ohio have already staged a Day of Fasting for the Arts to bring attention to the campaign to save the NEA and the NEH. Create a public demonstration or media event or even an arts festival to keep the issue in the news.

Getting Started

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in ASCII text format, including Washington office, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses, is available on the AFM BBS. Note that e-mail is *not* the preferred method for contacting your representative for the simple reason that the return address doesn't tell the reader which Congressional district you're writing from. Plus, it's hard to sign an e-mail message, so they can be forged relatively easily.

Another way to find the names, addresses and phone numbers of your state's Senators or your congressional district's representative is to call the office of the clerk of the House of Representatives in Washington, DC, at 202/225-7000.

Want to call your Representative or Senator yourself but don't know their Washington phone number? Call the Capitol operators:

House: 202/225-3121

Senate: 202/224-3121 (note the different exchanges)

NEA Grants for Fiscal Year 1994 (1994-95 season)

Grants for ROPA and ICSOM orchestras come from different divisions of the NEA. Most orchestras receive grants from the Orchestra Division, but opera and ballet companies get grants from the Opera/Musical Theater Division and the Dance Division. The Challenge Division gives one-time challenge grants to various arts companies and schools.

All of these ensembles also receive funding from state, regional or city arts councils. Since about 35% of the NEA budget goes directly to states, a substantial part of these additional grants may include money from the NEA.

Orchestras

The Orchestra category for FY 1994 distributed 188 grants in 47 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. These grants ranged in size from \$4,300 (El Paso, Ft. Wayne) to \$236,400 (Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco).

ROPA Orchestras	\$	ICSOM Orchestras	\$
Austin	14,600	Atlanta Symphony Orchestra	182,000
Charleston	10,000	Baltimore	212,000
Charlotte	35,000	Boston	236,000
Colorado Springs Symphony Orchestra	19,400	Buffalo Philharmonic	85,000
Dayton Philharmonic	32,200	Chicago Symphony Orchestra	236,400
Delaware	20,000	Cincinnati	187,700
El Paso	4,300	Cleveland Orchestra	236,400
Elgin	5,500	Colorado Symphony	32,000
Flint	4,300	Columbus Symphony Orchestra	108,300
Fort Wayne	36,200	Dallas	128,000
Fort Worth	48,600	Detroit	180,000
Fresno Philharmonic	5,300	Florida Orchestra	32,600
Grand Rapids	58,300	Florida Philharmonic	60,000
Hartford	29,200	Houston Symphony Orchestra	165,000
Jacksonville	26,600	Indianapolis	134,000
Kalamazoo	5,300	Los Angeles Philharmonic	225,000
Knoxville	19,500	Louisville	70,000
Long Beach	30,300	Milwaukee	142,500
Long Island Philharmonic	12,500	Minnesota	231,900
Los Angeles Chamber Orch. & Opera Ens.*	70,000	National Symphony	181,500
Memphis	29,200	New Jersey	92,900
Mississippi	4,800	New York Philharmonic	236,400
Nashville	35,000	North Carolina	77,800
New Haven	24,500	Oregon	105,000
New Mexico	32,000	Philadelphia Orchestra	236,400
Northeastern Pennsylvania	6,000	Phoenix	87,100
Omaha	32,000	Pittsburgh	230,000
Pacific Symphony	36,800	Rochester Philharmonic	102,000
Rhode Island Philharmonic	10,000	Saint Louis	233,000
Richmond (VA)	22,900	Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra	135,000
San Jose	38,900	San Antonio	53,500
Savannah	12,100	San Diego	75,900
Shreveport	13,300	San Francisco Symphony Orchestra	236,400
Spokane	19,400	Syracuse	63,000

Springfield (MA)	22,000	Utah	96,300
Toledo	43,000		
Tucson	23,000		
Tulsa Philharmonic	15,000		
Virginia Symphony Orchestra	22,900		
West Virginia	9,000		
Wichita	24,300		
TOTAL (ROPA)	\$963,200	TOTAL (ICSOM)	\$5,127,400

*Does not include Los Angeles Music Center Opera grant listed below.

Ballet Companies

Atlanta Ballet	10,000	San Francisco Ballet	255,000
(Pittsburgh Ballet Theater)	65,000	New York City Ballet	300,000
TOTAL BALLETT (ROPA)	\$75,000	TOTAL BALLETT (ICSOM)	\$555,000

Note: The Pittsburgh Ballet and Opera Orchestras are expected to become members of ROPA in the near future.

Opera Companies

Dallas Opera	115,200	San Francisco Opera ¹	343,150
Los Angeles Music Center Opera ²	107,000	Metropolitan Opera ³	480,000
(Pittsburgh Opera)	20,000	New York City Opera ⁴	214,450
		Lyric Opera of Chicago ⁵	315,000
TOTAL OPERA (ROPA)	\$242,200	TOTAL OPERA (ICSOM)	\$1,352,600

¹ San Francisco Opera figure includes \$293,600 for resident productions, \$33,000 for new American works/project support, and \$15,750 for Professional Artist Development.

² Uses Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra.

³ Metropolitan Opera figure includes \$480,000 for resident productions and \$13,500 for Professional Artist Development.

⁴ New York City Opera figure includes \$195,450 for resident productions and \$19,000 for touring productions.

⁵ Lyric Opera figure includes \$306,000 for resident productions and \$9,000 for Professional Artist Development.

It is obvious that grants given to opera and ballet companies are not necessarily for augmenting funds for their respective orchestras. However, if the NEA funds were lost or substantially reduced, this would easily create a climate where the managements of those companies might look to their orchestra musicians as part of a cost-cutting program or at least consider not giving wage increases.

These totals do not include grants given to smaller opera and ballet companies (i.e. Shreveport Opera, Opera Memphis) which may contract their orchestras from ROPA and ICSOM orchestras, and thus have a significant impact on the financial structure of those orchestras.

Challenge Grants

In FY94 only 1 symphony orchestra received a challenge grant: the Pacific Symphony (ROPA) received \$250,000 to augment its endowment fund.

More challenge grants were given to orchestras in FY93. The Los Angeles Philharmonic (ICSOM) received \$175,000 to increase its endowment, the Minnesota Orchestra Association (ICSOM) got \$250,000 for its endowment, and the Toledo Orchestra Association (ROPA) \$175,000 for its operating endowment. The Boston Symphony Orchestra (ICSOM) was awarded \$190,000 for a special endowment to offset increased operating costs associated with construction of a new concert hall and improvements at Tanglewood.

Challenge grants are usually connected with increases to the endowment, not operating funds for their orchestras. However, these grants have a great impact on the financial well-being of these ensembles.

Information on these two pages compiled by Andrew Brandt from the American Symphony Orchestra League's SYMPHONY Magazine (Nov./Dec. issue); and the Dance, Opera/Music Theater and Challenge Divisions of the National Endowment for the Arts.

Preserving the NEA: The Hurdles

An explanation of what's current and what's at stake by Andrew Brandt

FY94: For the 1994/95 season, the NEA is distributing money that was approved under the U.S. Fiscal Year 1994 budget (FY94). These funds, which have already gone through the grant review process, are not at risk. The FY94 budget was funded at \$170.2 million by Congress.

FY95: Last summer, Congress debated and approved funding for the NEA for FY95. The House of Representatives approved a cut of about 2%; the Senate proposed greater cuts, then accepted the House budget in a House-Senate conference. This reduced NEA funding to \$167.7 million in the final bill.

Rescission: HOWEVER, it is possible (some say likely) that the new 104th Congress will try to rescind expenditures approved last summer for FY95. As of this date, the Republican leadership of Congress has not announced any rescission proposal, but it is anticipated that cuts in the 2% to 10% range are possible. This would affect planned spending by agencies, not funds already obligated (contracted or awarded) as of the effective date of the rescission. (The deadline for grant

proposals to the NEA for FY95 is rapidly approaching.)

FY96 - Reauthorization: Before any budget is approved in 1995 for federal agencies for FY96 (such as the NEA, National Endowment for the Humanities, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, etc.) all agencies will have to be reauthorized. In past years, reauthorization was done semi-automatically by a "Continuing Resolution." The Republican leadership has announced that there will be no continuing resolutions this session. Opponents of the NEA will soon attempt to block its reauthorization, thus killing the agency in one swoop. This process could start within weeks or, at most, a couple of months. Immediate action is needed to convince our legislators to reauthorize the NEA.

Several nationally syndicated conservative columnists have already challenged the new Republican leadership to eliminate the NEA, NEH and CPB as a "signal" that they really want government reform.

Budgeting: IF the NEA is reauthorized, the agency will go through the normal budgeting process. The Republican House leadership is expected to release its budget proposals for FY96 in a matter of days, which will give us our first official glimpse of its approach to the NEA.


Congressional leaders will try to pass all the items the "Contract with America" in the first 100 days of the 104th Congress. The "Contract with America" included deficit reduction proposals offered last year in the **Penny/Kasich Amendment**, which failed by a narrow vote margin last year. This amendment called for a 2 percent budget cut each year for 5 years—a total of 10%—of the budgets for the NEA, NEH, CPB, the Smithsonian Institute and the National Gallery of Art. At present, this appears to be the most generous budget proposal by this Congress. Many radical conservatives have called for much more severe cuts in NEA spending.

Saving NEA funding will involve a two-step process: reauthorization and budgeting. If reauthorized, it is presently expected that the budgeting process could take several months. This, therefore, is the time frame in which our campaign to save NEA funding must be completed.

This synopsis was made possible by reports from the American Arts Alliance, the National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies, the American Symphony Orchestra League, and The New York Times.

ROPA Orchestras & Officers

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