



# THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

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February 26, 2009

The Honorable Bobby Jindal  
Governor  
State of Louisiana  
900 North 3rd Street  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Dear Governor Jindal:

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America's Mayors are extremely disappointed by your recent statements questioning the economic impact of the arts to our national, state and local economies. We are also highly concerned by your repeated attacks of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (the "Act") by highlighting the \$50 million dedicated to the National Endowment for the Arts.

While we certainly respect your right to oppose the Act, this funding, which represents .00635% of the total funding provided in the Act, has, we believe, become a convenient political scapegoat.

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Please consider the following information on the impact of arts and tourism to your own State of Louisiana:

The most recent figures from Dun & Bradstreet indicate Louisiana is home to 7,013 arts-related businesses that employ 27,117 people.

In Northwest Louisiana (10-parish region around Shreveport), nonprofit arts groups and their audiences generate \$89.77 million in economic activity, support 2,367 jobs, and provide nearly \$13 million in state and local tax revenue.

In addition to the arts contributing tremendously to Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts, the state launched the World Cultural Economic Forum this past fall to showcase the link between the arts, economy, and tourism. It will be expanded in 2009.

Louisiana's Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism launched the Louisiana Cultural Economy Initiative in 2004; in addition to promoting the arts, the program aims to attract businesses related to the arts to the state. Its 2004 report showed that for every state tax dollar spent, \$5.86 is returned to the state treasury and citizens of Louisiana.

The National Endowment for the Arts will distribute \$50 million of the stimulus funds to arts projects in all 50 states which specifically preserve jobs in the nonprofit arts sector that have been most hurt by the economic downturn. In 2008, Louisiana received 27 grants totaling \$1,343,700 from the National Endowment for the Arts.

CEO and Executive Director:  
TOM COCHRAN

A recent study released by the National Governors Association titled *Arts & the Economy: Using Arts and Culture to Stimulate State Economic Development* states, "Arts and culture are important to state economies. Arts and culture-related industries, also known as 'creative industries,' provide direct economic benefits to states and communities: They create jobs, attract investments, generate tax revenues, and stimulate local economies through tourism and consumer purchases."

The nation's 100,000 nonprofit arts organizations and their audiences generate \$166.2 billion annually in U.S. economic activity. They support 5.7 million jobs and provide nearly \$30 billion in government revenue. This economic stimulus will minimize the concern that ten percent of arts groups could close this year and helps save thousands of arts workers from losing their jobs.

Mayors clearly understand the important contribution of the arts to our local communities, financially and in terms of the quality of life for our residents. We remain hopeful that the foregoing information will assist you in more clearly understanding this issue, and that, as a result, arts funding will no longer serve as your basis for opposing the Act.

Sincerely,



Manuel A. (Manny) Diaz  
Mayor of Miami  
President



Mufi Hannemann  
Mayor of Honolulu  
Chair, Tourism, Arts, Parks,  
Entertainment and Sports  
Committee



Tom Cochran  
CEO and  
Executive Director