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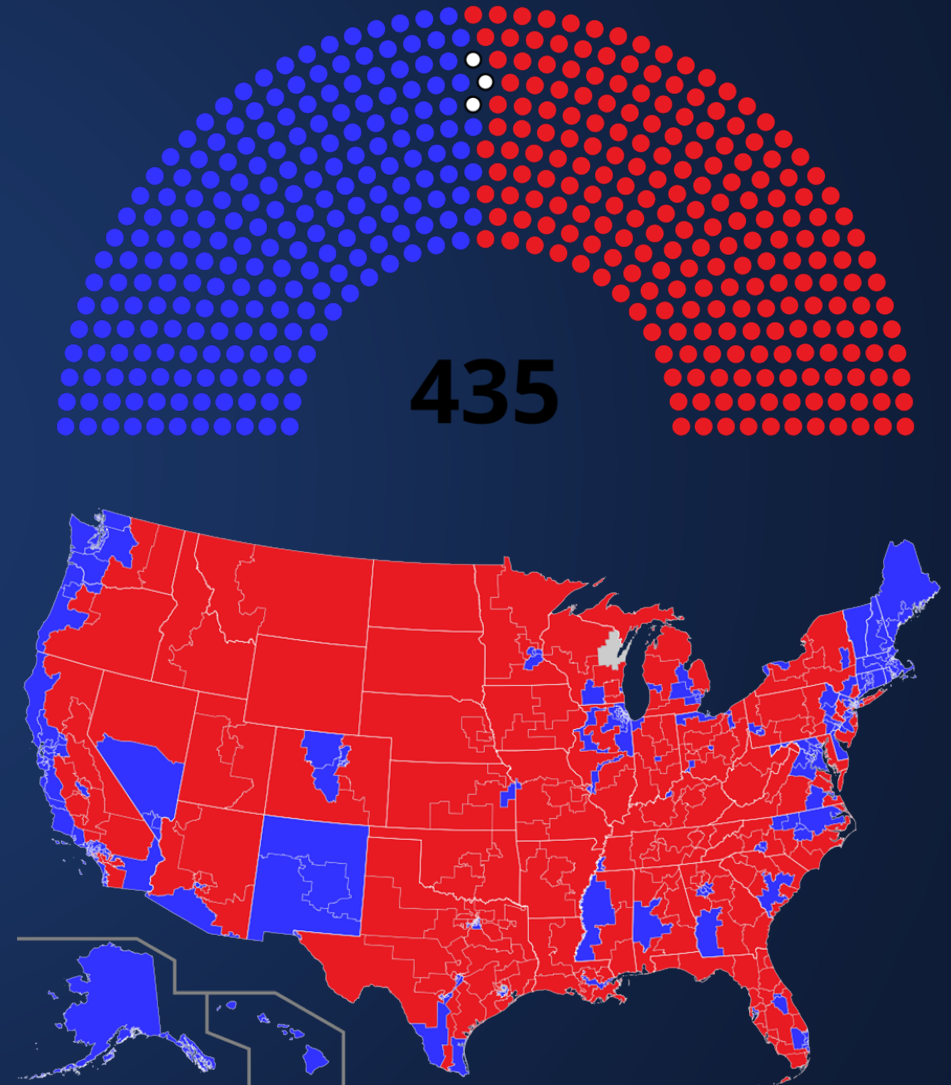
Advocacy 101



Current Political Landscape

The House of Representatives

- Republicans currently hold a narrow three-vote majority in the House of Representatives, where there are **220 Republicans** and **212 Democrats**.
- There are currently three vacancies in the House:
 - **Wisconsin's 8th Congressional District:** This seat was previously held by former Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-WI), who resigned in April.
 - **Texas' 18th Congressional District:** This seat was previously held by the late Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), who passed away in July.
 - **New Jersey's 9th Congressional District:** This seat was previously held by the late Rep. Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ), who passed away in August.



House Republicans

- House Republican leadership is relatively new to leadership. Speaker Mike Johnson, for example, has served in his current role for less than a year.
- During the 118th Congress, the House Republican Conference has faced some turmoil.
 - The previous Speaker, Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), required a historic 15 rounds of voting to secure the position. He was ousted after 269 days via a motion to vacate led by Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-FL).
 - Speaker Johnson has also faced a motion to vacate vote, led by Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-GA). He remains after a majority of Democrats and Republicans supported him. However, the threat of future motions to vacate remains.
 - Conflicts often stem from the House Freedom Caucus, which consists of the most far-right members of the Republican Conference.



Rep. Mike Johnson (R-LA)
Speaker



Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA)
Majority Leader



Rep. Tom Emmer (R-MN)
Majority Whip



Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-PA)
Conference Chair

House Democrats

- House Democratic leadership are also new to their current positions following the sweeping changes at the beginning of the 118th Congress.
- At the end of the 117th Congress – after 20 years as House Democratic leaders – Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD), and Majority Whip Jim Clyburn (D-SC) stepped down from their previous leadership roles, citing the need for a new generation of leaders.
- House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY), Minority Whip Katherine Clark (D-MA), and Caucus Chairman Pete Aguilar (D-CA), the top three House Democrats, all assumed their roles in January 2023. Assistant Democratic Leader Joe Neguse (D-CO) assumed his in March 2024.



Rep. Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY)
Minority Leader



Rep. Katherine Clark (D-MA)
Minority Whip



Rep. Pete Aguilar (D-CA)
Caucus Chair



Rep. Joe Neguse (D-CO)
Assistant Leader

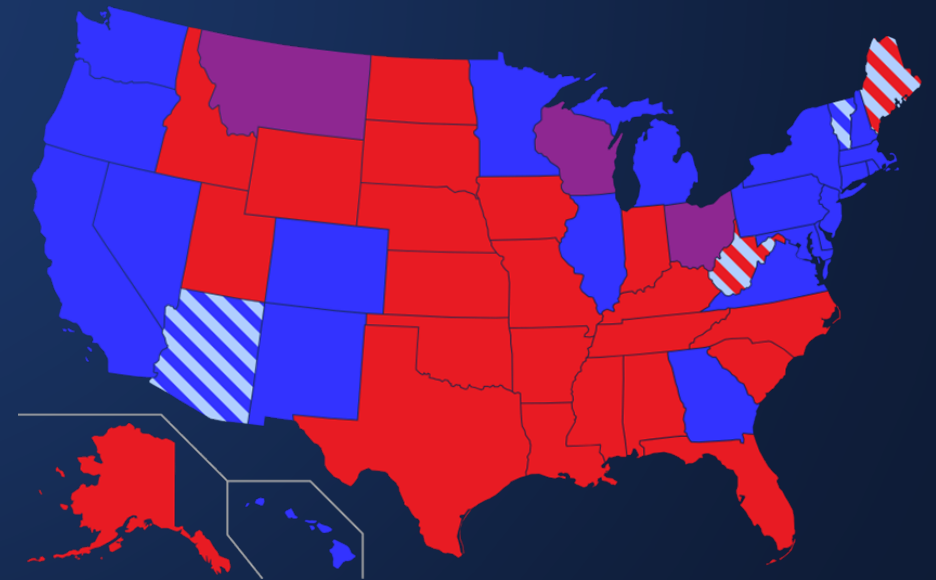
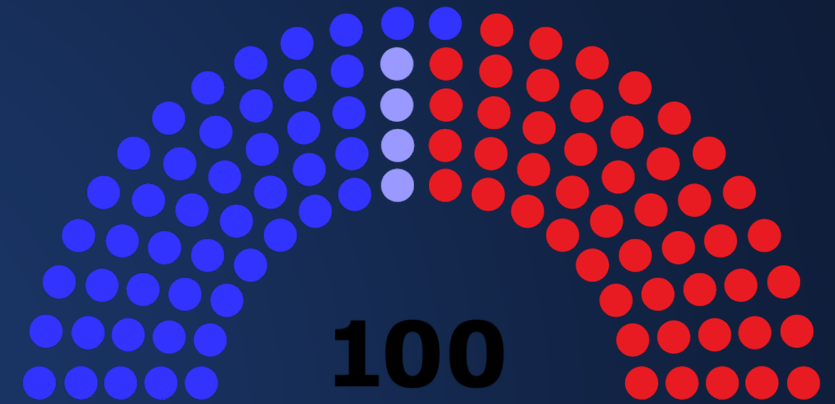
Current House Dynamics

- Disagreements within the House Republican Conference and historically narrow voting margins have impacted the ability to get things done.
 - Changes to House rules, which are set by the party in control of the chamber, have also impacted the ability of the House to operate and pass legislative.
 - The House Freedom Caucus has made it increasingly difficult for House Republican leadership to pass both partisan priorities and must-pass bipartisan measures.
- Members of the House are collectively “new.”
 - Members are now younger on average than in recent years, with the average age being 57.
 - The average length of service is shorter. Members now serve for an average of 8.5 years, compared to an average of 9.4 years in 2017.
 - 31.1 percent of House members have no more than two years of experience.



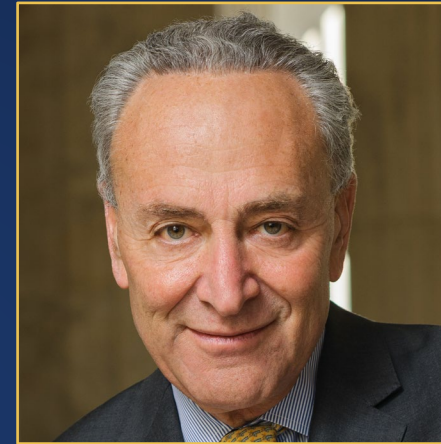
The Senate

- Democrats currently hold a slim 51-49 majority. This includes 4 Independents senators who caucus with the Senate's 47 Democrats.
- Vice President Kamala Harris also serves at the Senate President and can cast a tie-breaking vote if any legislation or nominee is tied at 50-50.
- Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) serves as President Pro Tempore of the Senate.



Senate Democrats

- Since the departure of the late Sen. Harry Reid in 2017, Senate Democratic leadership has remained steady.
- Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) has been in his role since January 2021 and has been the leader of the Senate Democratic Caucus since January 2017.
- Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) has served in leadership since January 2005.
- **One leadership change is expected next Congress:** the role of the Chair of the Democratic Policy and Communications Committee (DPCC) will need to be filled, as current Chair Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) is retiring at the end of this Congress.



Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY)
Majority Leader



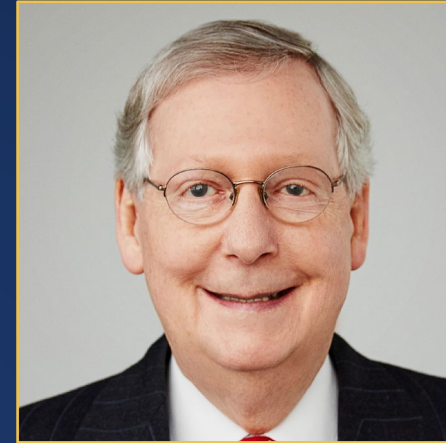
Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL)
Majority Whip



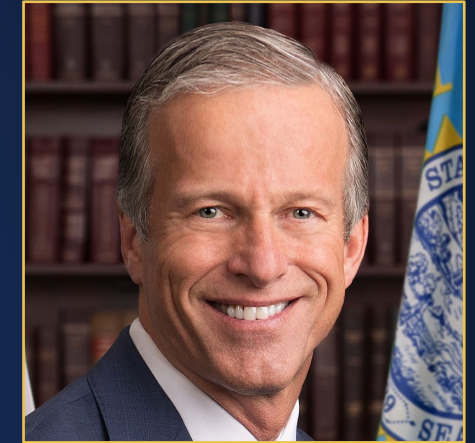
Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)
DPCC Chair

Senate Republicans

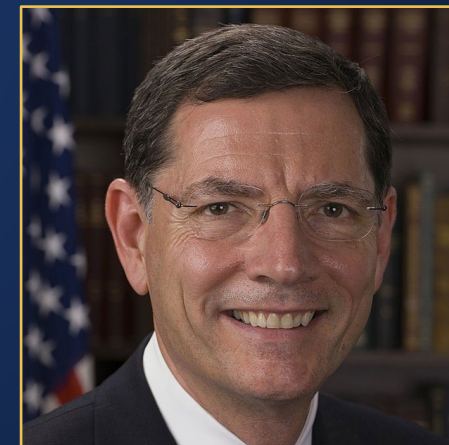
- The Senate Republican Conference has seen consistent leadership for years. Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY) has led the Conference since January 2007 and is the longest-serving party leader in Senate history.
 - He is stepping down from leadership at the end of this Congress. Those vying to replace him include current Republican Whip John Thune (R-SD), former Republican Whip John Cornyn (R-TX), and Sen. Rick Scott (R-FL).
 - Republicans are favored to win control of the Senate next month, so the winner of this race will likely be the Senate Majority Leader in the next Congress.
- Current Conference Chair John Barrasso (R-WY) is the leading candidate to be the next Senate Republican Whip.



Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY)
Minority Leader



Sen. John Thune (R-SD)
Minority Whip



Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY)
Conference Chair

Current Senate Dynamics

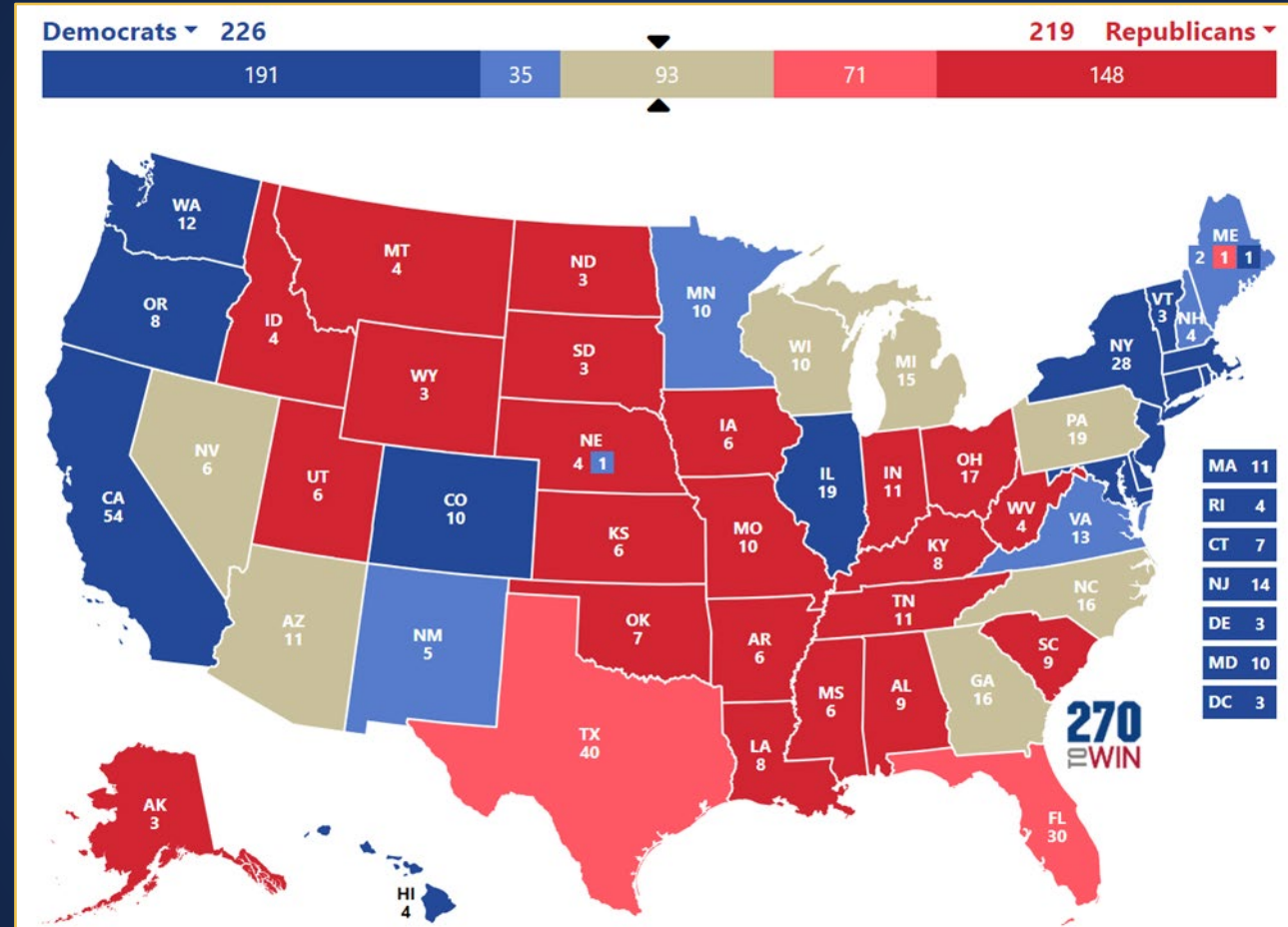
- There is a more bipartisan approach to governance in the Senate, particularly on matters such as appropriations.
 - The outcome of the Senate Republican Leader race could have a significant impact on the operation of the Senate moving forward.
- The Senate Republican Conference includes some newer members, as well as a growing populist wing.
- The Senate Democratic Caucus includes members spanning the Democratic political spectrum, from relatively conservative Independents to an Independent Democratic Socialist.
- During the 119th Congress, current Senate Democratic leadership is expected to largely remain the same, barring retiring Sen. Debbie Stabenow. Leader Chuck Schumer is expected to remain the Democratic Leader regardless of November's election result.





Election 2024

2024 Presidential Election



- The presidential election is currently considered a toss-up.
- **270** electoral votes are required to win.

2024 Presidential Election – The Toss-Up States

State	FiveThirtyEight Average	VoteHub US Average	Split Ticket Average	Split Ticket Model Forecast
Michigan	Harris +1.6	Harris +1.9	Harris +2.0	Harris 64% chance
Wisconsin	Harris +1.6	Harris +1.7	Harris +2.1	Harris 61% chance
Nevada	Harris +1.0	Harris +0.8	Harris +1.5	Harris 55% chance
Pennsylvania	Harris +0.6	Harris +1.2	Harris +1.2	Harris 58% chance
North Carolina	Trump +0.8	Trump +0.4	Trump +0.4	50/50
Georgia	Trump +1.3	Trump +1.3	Trump +1.5	Trump 57% chance
Arizona	Trump +1.3	Trump +1.7	Trump +1.5	Trump 53% chance





2024 Elections Outlook – House of Representatives

- Whether Democrats or Republicans will win control of the House in the 2024 elections is up in the air. **While Democrats currently have a small lead in the generic congressional ballot polling averages (+2.0%), the competition will be intense and likely very close.**
- While between 30 and 45 races are competitive, control of the House could ultimately be decided by about 20 toss-up seats – particularly a handful of seats in California and New York.
 - In California, there are four “toss-up” districts, one “leans D” district, and one “leans R” district.
 - In New York, there is one “toss-up” district, one “leans R” district, and three “leans D” districts. Rep. Brandon Williams (R-NY) 22nd District is vulnerable to challenger John Mannion (D).
- If all 435 House seats are all filled, 218 seats are needed for a majority. **Democrats only need to flip a net of four seats to win back the House majority.**
- Currently, 191 seats are considered “safe R.” 211 seats are rated safe, likely, or leans R.
 - 175 seats are considered “safe D.” 206 seats are rated safe, likely, or leans D.

2024 Elections Outlook – Senate

- **Democrats, with their narrow majority, face a difficult Senate map for 2024.**
 - Of the 34 Senate seats up for grabs, Democrats hold 23 and are defending seats in eight competitive states.
 - Three Democratic incumbents are from states former President Donald Trump won in both 2016 and 2020 (Montana, Ohio, and West Virginia). Other competitive states include Arizona, Nevada, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.
- There are 11 Republican seats up for election in 2024. Eight are considered “safe R” and three are considered “likely R.”
- **While the contest for control of the Senate will be very competitive, Republicans are favored to win back the chamber in November.** Current projections estimate Republicans will hold at least 51 Senate seats after this election, ensuring the majority regardless of the outcome of the presidential race.

Chances of the Four Likeliest 2024 Election Outcomes

President	House	Senate	Current Forecast
	D	R	30%
	D	R	40%
	R	R	20%
	D	D	10%



Federal Government and the Arts

The Post-Election Period of the 118th Congress

- Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 began on October 1, 2024. However, Congress has not yet passed any of its twelve appropriations bills to fund the various federal agencies for the FY 2025 cycle.
 - Instead of passing new bills to set new funding levels, Congress passed a short-term continuing resolution (CR) to fund the government at current levels through December 20.
 - Appropriations bills address both mandatory and discretionary spending. 1/3 of spending is discretionary
- **During the post-election period, most time will likely be spent trying to pass federal funding measures.**
- Depending on the outcome of the 2024 elections, Congress could opt to delay passing FY25 appropriations bills until January 2025, when newly-elected members of Congress will take office.
 - For example, if Republicans win control of both chambers of Congress and the White House, there would likely be pressure on Republican leadership to wait to address appropriations when they have full control of the government.
 - Depending on the party that wins control, this could be either beneficial or harmful for arts organizations.

Funding for the National Endowment for the Arts

- **When the Democratic party controls at least one chamber of Congress, the annual funding level for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) tends to be higher.**
- The NEA is an independent federal agency “that funds, promotes, and strengthens the creative capacity of our communities by providing all Americans with diverse opportunities for arts participation.” It awards approximately 2,700 grants annually, more than 70 percent of which go to small and medium-sized arts organizations.
 - Despite the importance of the agency, **it accounts for just 0.00337 percent of the federal budget.**
- House Republicans’ proposed FY25 Interior-Environment appropriations bill would provide the NEA \$203,895,000 in funding, a 1.5 percent decrease from FY24.
 - Senate Democrats’ bill would provide \$209,000,000 in funding, a roughly 1 percent increase.

Year	NEA Appropriation	Majority Party
2017	\$149,849,000	R
2018	\$152,849,000	R
2019	\$155,000,000	R/D
2020	\$162,250,000	R/D
2021	\$167,500,000	D
2022	\$180,000,000	D
2023	\$207,000,000	R/D
2024	\$207,000,000	R/D

Appropriations Guidance and Access to Earmarks

- During the annual budgetary process, members of Congress may request that specific appropriations bills include provisions directing a specified funding amount to a particular recipient. These “earmarked” provisions are typically embedded within one of twelve annual appropriations bills and are funded through one of several appropriations accounts affiliated with each bill.
- In FY24, House Republicans amended appropriations guidance such that “venues strictly for entertainment purposes” were ineligible to receive funds through the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations bill’s Economic Development Initiative (EDI) account. The EDI account supports the rehabilitation, restoration, modernization, and expansion of facilities, including ADA and energy efficiency upgrades.
 - In FY25, the House made all non-profit organizations ineligible, as well. This was a major shift, as nearly half of all 2024 House-funded EDI projects were directed to non-profit recipients.
- Numerous Democrats, including House Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), have objected to the “increasingly partisan” nature of House Republicans’ appropriations guidance and have pledged to reverse the changes if they win control of the chamber in November. **This would enable NAMT members to once again access critical federal resources.**

Legislative Opportunities



- Several pieces of legislation likely to benefit NAMT members were introduced during the 118th Congress. **Your advocacy could be the reason they are reintroduced during the 119th.**
- Many arts-related pieces of legislation have mostly, if not entirely, Democratic cosponsors. Often, this is merely a reflection of Republicans' fiscally conservative platform and hesitancy to increase federal government spending. Members of both major political parties are supporters of the arts and the theater, specifically.
 - **Your advocacy could be the reason a Republican member of Congress takes action to support the arts.**

Legislative Opportunities, Continued

The Supporting Theater and the Arts to Galvanize the Economy (STAGE) Act (H.R.7894/S.4084)

- The STAGE Act would authorize a new grant program, administered by the Economic Development Administration, to support the non-profit arts industry.
- Through the program, eligible theaters could receive grants equal to 20 percent of their total expenditures, up to \$16 million, from the most recent fiscal year.
- Grant funding could be used to cover a variety of routine expenses, including payroll, operating, and marketing costs.
- The bill would also require the President's Committee on Arts and the Humanities to conduct a study on federal support for the non-profit arts sector.

The Cultivating Resources for Emerging Artists to Thrive and Excel in Art Act (CREATE Art) Act (H.R.7918)

- The CREATE Art Act would establish a grant program within the Department of Labor to support emerging artists' early development.
- Eligible emerging artists could receive: (1) progress grants of up to \$2,000 "to support a year of artist activities such as recording, touring, showcasing, video production, and marketing"; (2) project grants of up to \$100,000 to support a proposed project; (3) live performance grants of up to \$35,000 to support live performances of current or upcoming releases; or (4) development fund grants of up to \$10,000 to cover "working and living expenses while researching, write, or cultivating stories and projects."

Legislative Opportunities, Continued

Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy (CREATE) Act (H.R.7281/S.3759)

- The CREATE Act would: (1) expand the Small Business Administration (SBA)'s Microloan Program to include artists, arts entrepreneurs, and small businesses that support the creative economy; (2) require the SBA to develop procedures to evaluate the business proposals and plans of non-employer business and small businesses within the creative economy; (3) require the SBA to partner with stakeholders to develop technical assistance programs that target the specific needs of artists and arts entrepreneurs; and (4) require the Secretary of Commerce, when providing grants and assistance through the bill, to provide arts agencies, artists, and creative workers “support through traditional economic development tools,” including incubators and “economic development planning and technical assistance.”

Performing Artist Tax Parity Act (H.R.2871)

- The Performing Artist Tax Parity Act would modify the above-the-line tax deduction for the expenses of performing artists (including commissions paid to managers or agents) to provide for a phaseout of the deduction for taxpayers whose gross income exceeds \$100,000, or \$200,000 for joint return filers.
- The phaseout threshold would be adjusted for inflation annually for taxable years beginning after 2023.



Advocacy 101

Key Themes to Include in Your Advocacy

The Importance of Your Cause

- **The theater is critical to America's culture, communities, and economy.**

Your "Why"

- **The COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating effect on live theater. Theaters that remain are still recovering.**

Meeting Preparation

- **Know the Member:**

- Is the member part of a related Caucus?
- Does the member have a history of supporting the arts and/or cosponsoring legislation that supports the arts?
- What's the member's party affiliation?
- Is the member on a relevant committee?
- What is your connection to the member? For example, are you a constituent? Is your theater in their district?

- **Know Your Talking Points and Your “Why”:**

- Why are you contacting the office or attending the meeting?
- Why is your ask vital to your theater and/or the wider industry?

Congressional Meeting Best Practices

- **Have a plan.**
- Be on time and respect other people's time.
- Thank staff for taking the meeting and introduce yourself.
- Outline your "ask" in the beginning of the meeting.
 - "I am here today to ask the Congressman to cosponsor the STAGE Act."
 - "We are here to discuss the importance of increasing funding for the NEA."
- **Facts are key!** Whenever possible, use hard facts about economic and cultural impacts.
- **Make the story personal!** Highlight constituent connections and local impacts.
- Engage in conversation and **LISTEN**.
- **Treat everyone like they are the decisionmaker.** Staffers advise members of Congress on policy and legislative issues, and members trust their staff.
- Take notes on receptivity and necessary follow-up.



Questions?