

Congressional Arts Report Card – August 2008

How did Florida’s Members of Congress do?

Every two years prior to the November elections, Americans for the Arts’ Arts Action Fund releases a **Congressional Arts Report Card** grading all current members of Congress on their support for the arts. Each member receives a grade A-F based on his or her voting record on the arts – refer to the grading system rules on pages 3 - 4.

In 2008 (the 2010 report card will be released in September 2010), Florida’s Members of Congress ranked as follows on federal arts issues – refer to issues 1 through 10 described on pages 4 - 5:

Six received As
Five received either B+s or Bs
Seven received Cs
Four received Ds
Three received Fs

It is a challenge to sustain a majority of allies who recognize the impact of the arts, so use the report card as a guide to help you make arts-informed decisions at the ballot box or urge your Congressional member to increase his or her support for the arts.

Florida

District	Representative (Party)	Score	Grade
9	Bilirakis, Gus (R) Arts friendly on issues 1,4 but not arts friendly on issues 2,3,5,6,7,8,9,10	40	C
2	Boyd, Allen (D) Arts friendly on issues 1,2,3,4 but not arts friendly on issues 5,6,7,8,9,10	80	B+
3	Brown, Corrine (D) Arts friendly on issues 1,2,3,5; missed vote on 4, but not arts friendly on issues 6,7,8,9,10	66	B
5	Brown-Waite, Ginny (R) Arts friendly on issues 1,4; but not arts friendly on issues 2,3,5,6,7,8,9,10	40	C
13	Buchanan, Vern (R) Arts friendly on issues 1,2,3,4,5; but not arts friendly	86	A

	on issues 6,7,8,9,10		
11	Castor, Kathy (D) Arts friendly on issues 1,2,3,4,9,10 but not arts friendly on issues 5,6,7,8	84	A
4	Crenshaw, Ander (R) Arts friendly on issues 3,4 but not arts friendly on issues 1,2,5,6,7,8,9,10	40	C
21	Diaz-Balart, Lincoln (R) Arts friendly on issues 1,4 but not arts friendly on issues 2,3,5,6,7,8,9,10	40	C
25	Diaz-Balart, Mario (R) Arts friendly on issues 1,4 but not arts friendly on issues 2,3,5,6,7,8,9,10	40	C
24	Feeney, Tom (R) Not arts friendly on issues 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10	0	F
23	Hastings, Alcee (D) Arts friendly on issues 1,2,3,4,5,9 but not arts friendly on issues 6,7,8,10	88	A
8	Keller, Ric (R) Not arts friendly on issues 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10	0	D
22	Klein, Ron (D) Arts friendly on issues 1,2,3,4,5,9 but not arts friendly on issues 6,7,8,10	88	B+
14	Mack IV, Connie (R) Arts friendly on issue 1 but not arts friendly on issues 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10	20	D
16	Mahoney, Tim (D) Arts friendly on issues 1,2,3,4 but not arts friendly on issues 5,6,7,8,9,10	80	B+
17	Meek, Kendrick (D) Arts friendly on issues 1,3,4; missed vote on issue 2; but not arts friendly on issues 5,6,7,8,9,10	60	B

4	Mica, John (R) Arts friendly on issue 1, but not arts friendly on issues 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10	20	D
1	Miller, Jeff (R) Not arts friendly on issues 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10	0	F
12	Putnam, Adam (R) Arts friendly on issues 1,4 but not arts friendly on issues 2,3,5,6,7,8,9,10	40	C
18	Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana (R) Arts friendly on arts issues 1,2,3,4,5 but not arts friendly on issues 6,7,8,9,10	86	A
6	Stearns, Cliff (R) Arts friendly on issue 4 but not arts friendly on issues 1,2,3,5,6,7,8,9,10	20	D
20	Wasserman Schultz, Debbie (D) Arts friendly on issues 1,2,3,4,5 but not arts friendly on issues 6,7,8,9,10	86	A
15	Weldon, Dave (R) Not arts friendly on issues 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10	0	F
19	Wexler, Robert (D) Arts friendly on issues 1,2,3,4,5,7,8 but not arts friendly on issues 6,9,10	90	A
10	Young, C.W. "Bill" (R) Arts friendly on issues 1,4 but not arts friendly on issues 2,3,5,6,7,8,9,10	40	C

The Grading System:

House Members received grades chiefly based on:

- Four major floor votes on arts funding
- Membership in the Congressional Arts Caucus
- Introduction or cosponsorship of arts-related legislation
- Signatures on "Dear Colleague" letters to the Appropriations Committee, asking it to increase funding for the NEA or for arts education

Of all these actions, the four major votes counted most heavily, at 20 points each, accounting for four-fifths of each possible total grade. Each of the other factors counted for six or two points. A detailed listing and explanation of all of the votes and grading factors follows this section.

In general, Members with perfect or near-perfect records got an A+ or A. Members with A+ grades are highlighted in bold. Those who voted the pro-arts position on at least three of the major votes received a B or better. Members who voted more than once against the arts usually received a grade no higher than a C. At the lowest end of the grading spectrum, those who voted consistently against the arts and who took few if any other positive actions received grades of D or F.

A few Members received bonus points for outstanding leadership, as explained in the footnotes. We gave incomplete grades to Members who came into office part way through the term, vacant seats, and to the Speaker of the House, who traditionally does not vote. The delegates from American Samoa, District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands received grades of B, A, B, B, and B+, respectively.

Finally, we acknowledge that a few Members with poor or fair voting records were supportive behind the scenes. We also recognize that some Members missed important votes for reasons that may have been beyond their control. This Congressional Arts Report Card is as accurate as we can make it, but like any grading system, it cannot reflect all aspects of each Member's performance. We encourage readers to be in touch with their own Members' offices if they have unanswered questions about their Members' records.

The Votes and Point Values

1. Amendment offered by Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-CO) to eliminate funding for the NEA.

Date: June 27, 2007

Result: Failed by a vote of 97 to 335

Citation: 110th Congress, 1st Session, Roll Call Vote 575

Pro-arts: no

Value: 20 points

2. Amendment offered by Rep. Ginny Brown-Waite (R-FL) to reduce funds for the NEA by \$32 million.

Date: June 27, 2007

Result: Failed by a vote of 137 to 285

Citation: 110th Congress, 1st Session, Roll Call Vote 564

Pro-arts: no

Value: 20 points

3. Amendment offered by Rep. Rob Bishop (R-UT) to decrease NEA funding and redirect \$31.588 million to Forest and Rangeland Research.

Date: June 26, 2007

Result: Failed by a vote of 156 to 270

Citation: 110th Congress, 1st Session, Roll Call Vote 554

Pro-arts: no

Value: 20 points

4. Amendment offered by Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-CO) to cut funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Date: July 18, 2007

Result: Failed by a vote of 72 to 357

Citation: 110th Congress, 1st Session, Roll Call Vote 662

Pro-arts: no

Value: 20 points

5. Membership in the Congressional Arts Caucus. The list is maintained by the office of Caucus Co-Chair Representative Louise Slaughter (D-NY).

Pro-arts: yes

Value: 6 points

6. Co-sponsorship of H.R. 1524 in the 110th Congress, offered by Representatives John Lewis (D-GA) and Jim Ramstad (R-MN), allowing artists and creators to claim a tax deduction for the fair market value of gifts of their own work to nonprofit arts organizations for mission-related use.

Result: Pending

Pro-arts: yes

Value: 6 points

7. Co-signed a Congressional Arts Caucus “Dear Colleague” letter in 2007, asking House appropriators for a funding increase for the NEA. The letters were initiated by Caucus Co-Chairs Representatives Slaughter (D-NY) and Shays (R-CT).

Pro-arts: yes

Value: 2 points

8. Co-signed a Congressional Arts Caucus “Dear Colleague” letter in 2007, asking for a funding increase for the Department of Education’s arts education grant programs. The letters were initiated by Caucus Co-Chairs Representatives Slaughter (D-NY) and Shays (R-CT) as well as Representative Jerrold Nadler (D-NY).

Pro-arts: yes

Value: 2 points

9. Co-signed a Congressional Arts Caucus “Dear Colleague” letter in 2008, asking House appropriators to increase the NEA’s FY 2009 funding to \$176 million. The letters were initiated by Caucus Co-Chairs Representatives Slaughter (D-NY) and Shays (R-CT).

Pro-arts: yes

Value: 2 points

10. Co-signed a Congressional Arts Caucus “Dear Colleague” letter in 2008, asking for a funding increase of \$53 million for the Department of Education’s Arts in Education program for FY 2009. The letters were initiated by Caucus Co-Chairs Representatives Slaughter (D-NY) and Shays (R-CT).

Pro-arts: yes

Value: 2 points