



Sunset Caucus

## Waste Action Alert

*A publication of the RSC Sunset Caucus from co-chairs Kevin Brady (R-TX) and Jason Chaffetz (R-UT)  
Rep. Tom Price (R-GA), RSC Chairman*

### **Eliminate the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Subsidy**

*March 4, 2010*

**Program or Item Targeted:** The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

**One-Year Cost of Program or Item:** \$167.5 million for FY 2010. This is \$12.5 million more than what was granted in FY 2009 and \$6.2 million more than the President's FY 2010 budget request.

**Background on Program or Item to Be Sunseted:** The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) was created by Congress in 1965 and provides funding, by way of grants, for art projects. The NEA is one of more than 200 federal programs for the arts and humanities.

**Why This Program or Item Is Wasteful:** The arts receive tens of billions of dollars each year, and the NEA subsidy represents less than 1% of this money. Support for the arts can easily be supported by state and local governments, and private donations. Providing federal funding for the NEA discourages charitable giving, as donors will now believe that government has accepted the responsibility to provide funding. Also, federal funding threatens the independence of the arts and artists. Ralph Waldo Emerson saw how government subsidies threaten artistic inspiration and said that "Beauty will not come at the call of the legislature.... It will come, as always, unannounced, and spring up between the feet of brave and earnest men." At a time when American families are forced to cut back on all walks of life, they should not also be forced to financially support NEA spending which is not a critical responsibility of the government. Eliminating funding for the NEA is a step toward a commitment to eliminating wasteful spending and putting the federal budget back in order.

**Legislative Steps Taken So Far:** Representative Paul Broun offered two amendments to the FY 2010 Interior Appropriations bill, H.R. 2996. Neither amendment was made in order as part of the Democrat majority's unprecedented restriction on the ability of the minority to offer amendments in the appropriations process. One amendment would have eliminated all funding for the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities, and the other would have reduced it by 50%.

If you would like to participate in eliminating wasteful programs with the RSC Sunset Caucus, please e-mail [brad.watson@mail.house.gov](mailto:brad.watson@mail.house.gov).

If you have a bill or amendment to highlight in the next Waste Action Alert please contact [ryan.tronovitch@mail.house.gov](mailto:ryan.tronovitch@mail.house.gov).

Note: Not every item featured in the Waste Action Alerts is necessarily endorsed by the RSC. These Alerts highlight the individual initiatives of members of the RSC Sunset Caucus.

*"The RSC Sunset Caucus uncovers government waste and seeks to eliminate it,  
working to sunset programs that taxpayers shouldn't be paying for."*

**RSC**   
Republican Study Committee