

# NY12 LIVE ARTS AGENDA

**NOTE:** *Each individual union listed below runs their own endorsement process, and uses their own criteria to determine whether they will endorse a candidate. The document below is a statement of our shared policy priorities for the live arts.*

**TO: Candidates for Congress, NY12**

**FR: Actors' Equity Association, Local One IATSE, Local 802 AFM, AGMA**

**RE: The Live Arts Capital of the World Deserves an Arts Champion in Congress**

**DT: 3/17/26**



**From Carnegie Hall to Lincoln Center and Broadway, New York's 12th Congressional District is the unquestioned live arts capital of the world, home to thousands of arts workers who make New York City an international destination for millions of tourists.**

With the open NY12 Congressional Seat, New York has a rare opportunity to elect a true live arts champion to represent the thousands of musicians, actors, stage managers, directors, writers, stagehands, dancers, singers, crew and so many others that power a sector responsible for more than 100,000 jobs, nearly 70 percent of which are located in NY12.

As the arts unions in this sector, we ask that any candidate who is running for the NY12 Congressional seat commit to support the following federal policy ideas that will protect live arts workers and our industry.

## **1. Always Make Room at the Table for Union Voices**

- Federal arts policies and funding programs must be shaped with the unions who represent actors, stage managers, musicians, stagehands, designers, directors, and crew. Decisions made without union input risk harming worker safety, undermining wages and benefits, weakening the creative economy, and creating policy blind spots that overlook how the industry actually functions.
- Advocate for seats for worker advocates on the National Council on the Arts, the National Council on the Humanities and the Kennedy Center.

## 2. Make Arts Work Sustainable, Protect Union Jobs and the Right to Organize

- Support the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act.
- Support federal investment in state unemployment systems and unemployment benefits for striking workers. Support the Empowering Striking Workers Act.
- Strengthen NLRB enforcement and crack down on misclassification in the arts.
- Support the Restoring Justice for Workers Act.
- Modernize and strengthen NEA/NEH prevailing wage requirements.

## 3. Be a Leader in Driving Investment in the Creative Economy

- Commit to pushing Congressional leadership for NEA/NEH funding to match the size and impact of the sector during the annual appropriations process: \$1 per capita by 2028.
- Always oppose traps that tie more arts funding with reduced worker standards and benefits.

## 4. Ensure Safety, Health and Well-Being

- Improve funding for OSHA in the live arts, which have uniquely dangerous workplaces for live arts workers.
- Support affordable, universal federal health care for all.
- Improve healthcare access for arts workers with fluctuating incomes.

## 5. Protect Artists in the Digital Age

- Enact strong federal protections against unauthorized AI replication of performers' likeness, voices, and designs.

- Oppose Congressional bans on state or local regulation of AI products.
- Support fair pay when live performances are streamed or recorded.
- Always fight to ensure union arts workers are at the table on AI policy discussions.
- Support the principles of the Human Artistry Campaign, which centers the voices of arts workers in AI policy debates.
- Support the American Music Fairness Act

## 6. Support a More Inclusive Live Arts Sector

- Support the Create a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair (CROWN) Act
- Support the Equality Act.
- Defend the right of people to make their own reproductive healthcare decisions.
- Fight for a federally funded incubator grant program to help underrepresented people pursue creative projects and make connections with industry mentors.

## 7. Build the Next-Generation Arts Workforce

- Strengthen arts education as core learning and invest in union-led apprenticeships in stagecraft, design, music, and technical arts.
- Support pathways from local schools and colleges into the live arts workforce.

## 8. Support Tax Fairness for Arts Workers

- Support the bipartisan Performing Artist Tax Parity Act (PATPA), which would allow professional arts workers to once again deduct their unreimbursed business expenses from their federal income taxes.