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Rep. Dusty Johnson
1714 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

October 19, 2021

Dear Congressman Johnson,

We have all heard about the benefits of Arts Education. Studies indicate that access to arts education increases literacy rates, advances math skills, contributes to better attendance records, and generally benefits all aspects of education. We also know arts education provides a foundation for skills such as problem-solving, collaboration and boosts confidence. In so many words, arts education better prepares us for what is ahead in life. As I think back to my time in school (and I'm guessing your experiences may be similar), playing the trumpet and having access to arts education was critical to who I am today. Band gave me something to work towards, instilled a sense of community and camaraderie, pushed me to do my best, and established an attitude of confidence and a "can-do" spirit that continues in all I do to this day. It's not about playing the trumpet or trombone (although I do still love to play the horn); it's about becoming the best we can be. Arts Education is fundamental to achieving success, and it's vital that all South Dakotans have access to arts education.

With this in mind, I encourage your support of Congresswoman Bonamici's "Arts Education for All" Act, introduced last week Friday. It is the broadest arts education policy bill ever introduced in Congress, includes key provisions that will support and encourage the offering of arts education and programming experiences to Americans, including our youngest learners, K-12 students, and youth impacted by the juvenile justice system. Importantly, the bill will also include provisions that would allow for rigorous arts and arts education research to be carried out to inform further how elementary and secondary education in our country is improved. It's a bill that should rise above partisan politics, and we need a Republican to co-sponsor this important legislation. If anybody in the 117th Congress can rise above partisan ranks and do what is best for our country, I believe it is you. South Dakotans support Arts Education!

Thanks for taking the time to read my letter, Dusty. Please find the full text to the Arts Education for All Act [here](#), and the press release [here](#). Thank you for your leadership and service to our state. If I can be of service to you at any time, please never hesitate to contact me.

Best Regards,



Jim Speirs
Executive Director

cc. Andrew Christianson, Chief of Staff

