

MISSOURI CITIZENS FOR THE ARTS

Covid-19 Relief for the Arts

This summary is based on highlights provided by the Arts Action Fund, an effort of Americans for the Arts.

CONGRESS PASSED A SECOND ROUND OF ECONOMIC RELIEF LEGISLATION

On December 21, Congress passed a second round of funding that includes \$900 billion for COVID-19 economic relief. The bill was signed into law on December 27. Missouri Citizens for the Arts continues to advocate with the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and members of the Missouri General Assembly, to designate funding from the first round of CARES Act funding for Missouri's arts industry.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CREATIVE SECTOR?

- **A SECOND ROUND OF STIMULUS CHECKS**
\$600 to individuals making up to \$75,000 per year (based on 2019 tax returns) and \$1,200 to couples making up to \$150,000 with an additional \$600 payment per dependent child; the size of the payment decreases for individuals earning more than \$75,000 per year and is unavailable to those earning more than \$99,000
- **THE SAVE OUR STAGES INITIATIVE**
\$15 billion to grant to live entertainment venues, movie theatres, and some cultural institutions
- **PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM (PPP)**
\$284 billion for first and second rounds of PPP, forgivable small business loans and a simplified application process for loans of \$150,000 or less
- **RENTAL ASSISTANCE**
\$25 billion in rental assistance for individuals who lost income due to the pandemic and an extension of the national federal eviction moratorium through January 31, 2021
- **MORE THAN \$8 BILLION FOR VACCINE DISTRIBUTION**
- **UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE** (these new and extended benefits will likely take some time to kick in)
 - for salaried/hourly workers, the Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) program has been extended -- all recipients of unemployment will receive an extra \$300 per week in benefits for 10 or 11 weeks
 - "mixed earners" with 1099 and W-2 income, who were previously denied Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits, will now be eligible if they had at least \$5,000 in self-employment income in 2019; they also will receive an additional \$100 per week (states must opt-in to the mixed earner program before the \$100 is added); this legislative fix is another major victory given that the CARES Act relief package passed in March prevented freelance workers who qualified for regular unemployment compensation from receiving PUA benefits based on their entire earnings – **NOTE: MCA is working with Missouri's Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to make sure Missouri opts-in to this program to access available funding.**
 - states are now allowed to waive collecting overpayments of unemployment in cases where the claimant is not at fault or if repayment would be contrary to equity and good conscience.
- **NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS & NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES**
3% increase in the FY21 appropriation to the NEA and NEH and waiver language that allows grants to be used for general operating support – **NOTE: MCA successfully advocated to include additional spending authority for the Missouri Arts Council in order to access the first round of CARES funds through the NEA.**
- **INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES** to receive \$257 million
- **CHARITABLE GIVING**
joint filers who don't itemize deductions on their tax returns can take an above-the-line deduction for up to \$600 in cash contributions to charity starting in 2021; this is an increase from \$300