

(The complete statement referred to follows:)

STATEMENT OF RALPH G. BEELKE, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, THE NATIONAL ART
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Ralph G. Beelke and I am executive secretary of the National Art Education Association, a department of the National Education Association. The National Art Education Association is a professional association of teachers of art from the elementary school through the college and university levels and has approximately 5,000 members. I am pleased to represent the association at these hearings and to inform the committee of the association's support for H.R. 4172 and H.R. 4174.

At the recent biennial conference of the National Art Education Association held during April, a resolution supporting these bills was adopted upon the recommendation of the association's legislative committee. The resolution reads as follows:

"Whereas it is a responsibility of the National Art Education Association to be cognizant of and actively support Federal legislation pertaining to the arts: Be it

Resolved, That the National Art Education Association strongly urge that the present Congress take favorable action on the following bills currently submitted or pending: H.R. 4172, a bill to provide for the establishment of a Federal Advisory Council on the Arts; H.R. 4174, a bill to establish a program of grants to States for the development of programs and projects in the arts."

The resolution also lists companion bills introduced into the Senate.

The association has supported arts legislation in previous sessions of the Congress. The record of other hearings will testify to our interest and to the interest of many individual members of our association who have often written in support of efforts designed to provide Federal recognition of the arts. I can only reaffirm here the belief of our association in the importance of the arts in our national life and in the lives of individuals, and of our hope that the 87th Congress will not only provide Federal recognition of the arts but will provide concrete means for the encouragement and support of art activities.

The specific interest of our association is the visual arts. The work of American artists, painters, sculptors, architects, and graphic artists, is outstanding in today's visual activity throughout the world. There is general agreement that the visual arts of the United States are vigorous and that our country is the art capital of the world. There is also general agreement that the quality of the visual production of many American artists is due to the support that most received from the Federal Government in the years of the WPA. This Federal support was, admittedly, support given to solve a human problem rather than a cultural one. The results culturally, however, are being realized today in the quality of American visual production and in the esteem in which this production is held in the free world and, to the extent possible, by the artists in countries not free as viewed in our terms.

President Kennedy referred to our society as an open one in relation to the publicity of our recent space effort. History shows that the arts flourish in an open society and that it is within an open context that new ideas and new expressions are born. There is no doubt of the creative inventiveness of American artists in the fields of the dance, painting, architecture, music, and the theater, and world leadership and vigor will continue to be ours in these arts if we nurture and support them. The bills now being considered do this very thing and do it by maintaining the open system of a free society.

In closing I would repeat—the National Art Education Association strongly endorses H.R. 4172 and H.R. 4174. We feel the Federal Government should (1) recognize the arts as an important part of our national life; (2) give concrete evidence of support and encouragement to arts activities; and (3) structure this recognition and support in such a way that the characteristics of our open society are maintained.

Mr. THOMPSON. We had scheduled 2 days of hearings. We have done remarkably well.

The full committee is to meet tomorrow.

Our next witness is Miss Marie A. Hurley, the national legislation chairman of the National Federation of Music Clubs. Thank you for coming.