

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND
CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS,
Washington, D.C., May 17, 1961.

HON. FRANK THOMPSON, JR.,
*Chairman, Select Subcommittee on Education of Committee on Education and
Labor, House Office Building, Washington, D.C.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: It is with pleasure that the AFL-CIO adds its support to H.R. 4172, providing for a Federal Advisory Council on the Arts, and H.R. 4174, authorizing funds for the development of programs and projects in the arts. We urge your committee to seek speedy enactment of these measures.

I am sure you are aware that the labor movement is deeply concerned in the development of cultural pursuits. Many members of the AFL-CIO are performing artists whose lives have been given to music and drama. Many others have participated in union-sponsored programs in choral singing, ceramics, drama, and other artistic pursuits during nonworking hours.

The need for the Federal programs envisioned in H.R. 4172 and H.R. 4174 will become greater with the passage of time. Our Nation is already in the midst of a second great technological revolution brought on by automation. This new skill—the substitution of machines for the human mind in the production of goods and services—has already sparked a reduction in the workweek for many American workers.

As automation spreads to new industries and new plants, we may expect the 40-hour week to become a thing of the past, supplanted by a 35-hour or a 30-hour week. Several of our unions have already established a less-than-40-hour week through collective bargaining, and more will do so in the future.

Much of this new-found leisure will be channeled into recreational pursuits, including outdoor activities and academic education. Cultural activities and education in the arts should expand and grow with these other pursuits.

Establishment of the proposed Advisory Council would give a needed and salutary public focus on cultural development. It is noteworthy that the Advisory Council would not be limited to those in "classical" art fields, but would include the newer art forms. This is a proper recognition of the broad interest of our people.

H.R. 4174 would, through its encouragement of activity in the several States, insure important local impetus to development programs. Such interest on the part of local groups throughout the country is essential to any real broadening of our cultural base.

May I again congratulate you and your committee on your interest in this legislation. I hope you will include this letter in the record of the hearings.

Sincerely yours,

ANDREW J. BIEMILLER,
Director, Department of Legislation.

THE LEAGUE OF NEW YORK THEATRES, INC.,
New York, N.Y., May 17, 1961.

HON. FRANK THOMPSON, JR.,
*Chairman, Subcommittee on Cultural Activities,
House Office Building,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN THOMPSON: In telephone conversation with Mr. Frain we advised him of our support of legislation establishing a Federal Advisory Council on the Arts and enactment of a national cultural development program.

We take this opportunity to reaffirm to you our support for such legislation and would like to request from you what further action might be required from our organization to sponsor such urgently needed programs.

We appreciate your interest on our behalf.

Sincerely yours

IRVING W. CHESKIN, *Executive Director.*