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RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF DESIGN

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September 9, 1993

The Honorable Eliot L. Engel
1434 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Engel:

As incoming president of Rhode Island School of Design, one of my first priorities external to the campus is to seek your cosponsorship or support for H.R. 2933, the "Community Arts Partnership Act of 1993."

This bill would provide much-needed federal money for local school districts to form partnerships with cultural entities in their community such as libraries, museums, institutions of the arts, etc. This funding would stimulate programs to reform current school practices through the arts as well as develop staff positions to integrate the arts into school curricula. It also would initiate artistic and cultural programs designed to actively involve parents in their children's education.

I wholeheartedly support such a visionary endeavor. Too often in today's difficult economic times the arts become an early casualty when the slashing of public school budgets occurs.

I applaud Secretary of Education Riley's insight and persistence to include the arts in the National Educational Goals. Realistically, however, local school districts require funding assistance in order to offer programs that nurture the talent of tomorrow's artists, designers, architects and others who enrich our everyday lives.

Although federal money spent on art is not as immediately tangible as highway construction, it will, indeed, pave the way for today's youth to be exposed to many irreplaceable experiences that express life's wonder. The importance of art in our society cannot be overstated. James Thurber once pointedly said, "A nation in which a congressman can seriously ask, 'Do you think the artist is a special person?' is a nation living in cultural jeopardy."

Therefore, I hope you will please consider H.R. 2933 favorably. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,


Roger Mandle
President

