Advancing Equity Through the Arts and Humanities Act

Background

- In America, there is a narrative that art is only for “artists”, but access to the arts has shown a profound effect on those most impacted by the justice system, children, veterans, low-income communities, etc.
- Children of color, who make up the overwhelming percentage of the children living in poverty in the U.S., and other students with lower socioeconomic status have a lower probability of accessing arts education.
- From 1982 to 2008, access to arts education for children of color decreased by an average of 45%, whereas white children saw a less than 2% decrease in access to arts education.
- Low-income neighborhoods with cultural resources have 14% fewer cases of child abuse and neglect, and 18% less serious crime than low-income neighborhoods without cultural resources.
- 71% of at-risk students with high arts involvement attend college, whereas only 48% of at-risk students with low arts involvement attend college.

ADVANCING EQUITY THROUGH THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES PROGRAM

- This legislation would create the “Advancing Equity Through the Arts and Humanities Program”, carried out by the Chair of NEA and NEH, aimed at increasing engagement with public and nonprofit entities, including faith based and community-based organizations, that serve and are led by people of color, and to support arts and humanities projects that directly combat systemic racism.
  - Program will build and implement a competitive grant program that will directly combat systemic racism through the arts and humanities, no later than 180 days after the passage of this bill
    - Priority for the grant will be given to public and non-profit organizations that are BIPOC-led, have majority BIPOC membership, or who have a proven history of effective antiracism work and shows a commitment to supporting the BIPOC community
  - Program will improve existing NEA and NEH programs to include strategies to dismantle systemic racism through the arts and humanities