

*Statement of Michael M. Kaiser*  
*President, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts*  
**Before the House Committee on Appropriations'**  
**Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies**  
**April 14, 2010**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, my name is Michael Kaiser and I have the honor of serving as the president of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. It is my pleasure to appear before your panel this morning to present the Center's budget request for fiscal year 2011. Before doing so, I would like to thank the Subcommittee for its past support and for allowing me the opportunity to share with you the Kennedy Center's progress with its operations, maintenance and renovations. I also extend my gratitude to your staff for the impressive work they do throughout the year to help the Center.

For the benefit of members new to this Subcommittee, I'd like to take a moment to describe the Kennedy Center. The Kennedy Center is both our national cultural center and a living memorial to President John F. Kennedy. I emphasize the word "living" since there is a vitality to the building and the institution that far exceeds anything that could have been envisioned when the Center was chartered by Congress in 1958 under President Dwight D. Eisenhower as the national cultural center.

Each year, the Kennedy Center reaches over one million people with more than 2,000 performances in all performing arts disciplines. Every season, our focus is on developing programming that achieves national and international acclaim as is befitting our role as the national cultural center. But our performing arts activities are not limited to the Washington D.C. area. We are committed to serving people in all 50 states.

The National Symphony Orchestra, a vital part of the Kennedy Center for over 20 years, is fulfilling this mandate by expanding its national touring activities. Our Theater for Young Audiences on Tour program brings the best of family and children's theater to 65 cities in 38 states and serves over a quarter million people annually.

The Center is committed to making arts accessible to everyone and presents free performances every day of the year on its Millennium Stage. In addition, these performances are available free to everyone via live Internet broadcasts.

Our leadership in the performing arts is mirrored by our commitment to arts education.

The Kennedy Center has created one of the most extensive arts education programs in the world spending \$125 million over five years on this effort and serving 11 million people nationwide. We now train 30,000 teachers annually to bring the arts into the classroom at all levels. Our distance learning initiatives, which touch more than one million teachers and students, enable classrooms to experience world-class performances

and programs broadcast from the Kennedy Center. Our Partners in Education Program mentors relationships between arts organizations and their community school systems with 104 organization teams in school systems in 46 states, including the District of Columbia.

One of our newest initiatives, Any Given Child, seeks to work with individual communities across America to ensure that every child has the arts as part of their educational experience. Based on the premise that every community has rich cultural resources, a plan is created to combine those resources with the schools' and the Kennedy Center's resources to coordinate arts education in a logical, equitable, and economic way.

The Kennedy Center also provides training to talented young Americans who aspire to careers in dance, music, conducting and set design. Our American College Theater Festival identifies the next generation of actors, designers and playwrights with 20,000 students from 900 colleges participating.

In addition, the Kennedy Center has instituted several programs which we hope will change the landscape of the arts in America. The premise of these programs is that our nation invests heavily to cultivate artistic talent, but comparatively little to train arts managers. The Arts Management Institute prepares arts managers to lead arts institutions throughout the nation and the world and offers arts organizations practical training to address management challenges. In February 2009, to promote practical strategies for financial and institutional health during these difficult economic times, I initiated Arts in Crisis, a free consulting service for arts organizations and a series of community conversations for staff and board members. With this program the Center will reach 69 communities in 50 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.

In fall 2010, the Kennedy Center will implement a National Capacity Building Program. This program is modeled after an initiative, launched in 2002 and developed for Culturally Specific Performing Arts Organizations, to provide strategic planning guidance and other technical assistance for executive directors, artistic directors and board chairs of 31 arts organizations whose mission is to produce and present work for, by or about African-American, Latino, Asian or Native-American people. The success of this initial program fostered programs for a broad range of organizations in Washington D.C., New York City, and Chicago. The new national program will provide arts managers at over 200 organizations in five American cities with comprehensive training in strategic planning, marketing, and fundraising. In each city, I, along with members of senior Kennedy Center staff, will lead seminars and online discussions, and provide specialized mentoring to each participating organization. I am especially grateful for the Committee's past support of this important effort.

The Kennedy Center Board of Trustees and its staff take very seriously our responsibility to maintain the building, a Federal asset, in the best condition possible. We appreciate the support and guidance we receive from Congress and your subcommittee in particular. The Office of Management and Budget has worked very closely with my staff to assess our budgetary needs and to evaluate our comprehensive building plan. I will

also say, Mr. Chairman, that I am most grateful to this Subcommittee for its support of our request for \$40.447 million for fiscal year 2010.

The Kennedy Center is requesting a total of \$37.42 million for fiscal year 2011. That amount covers two separate accounts: "Operations and Maintenance," for which \$23.5 million is needed, and "Capital Repair," for which \$13.92 million is requested. I will delineate for you the projects, renovations and costs that comprise these numbers.

Before I present the Center's capital repair and restoration plans for fiscal year 2011, I would like to review briefly some of the projects that have been completed since I last appeared before the Committee three years ago. The renovation of the Eisenhower Theater, our third largest theater, and the related dressing rooms, was completed on schedule in September 2008. This project enhanced accessibility and egress, installed fire sprinklers and fire separations to bring the space into compliance with current fire codes, upgraded mechanical, electrical and theatrical systems and replaced all finishes. In addition to this project, the Center installed fire sprinkler systems and fire separation upgrades on the Roof Terrace level, painted the exterior columns, renovated the motor lobbies to install sprinklers and fire separation doors, made fully accessible all bathrooms not previously renovated as part of other projects, and modernized the mechanisms of the elevators.

A number of important projects are now underway: spalled concrete repairs in the garage have begun and renovation of the Concert Hall support spaces will be completed this summer. The replacement of the large window walls on the Plaza level and the Roof Terrace Level began last month. In addition, this year the construction contract to modernize our major mechanical and electrical systems will be awarded. An important aspect of the window wall and systems modernization projects is improved energy efficiency.

The Kennedy Center's request for 2011 for Capital Repair and Restoration funding will allow two projects, for which design is currently in process, to move forward with construction. These are:

- Door hardware replacement to bring all doors up to current code with new lever handles, compliant door openers, panic hardware and other opening devices. This is necessary for both accessibility and life safety reasons.
- Modernization of the heating hot water system. The Center's system consists of a combination of electric and gas boilers that deliver hot water in a complex piping system, much of which is original to the building. This project will provide invaluable updates to this system to improve heating delivery and control, reduce energy consumption and extend the life of the equipment.

In addition, the Center's request includes funding for project design for the renovation of the Terrace Theater. This theater, which opened in 1978 and still has its

original finishes, requires improvements to accessibility, finishes and mechanical, electrical and plumbing infrastructure. Construction is anticipated to proceed in 2013, contingent on funding.

The Operations and Maintenance needs of the Kennedy Center for fiscal year 2011 total \$23.5 million. This amount will fund:

- the daily operation of the physical facility and building systems, including utility costs
- preventive and predictive maintenance to ensure the Center is open and fully functional every day of the year
- non-routine and emergency repair projects
- security officers, staff, and safety personal to maintain a safe and secure building
- essential visitor services, including public tours, interactive kiosks, informational brochures, and other services related to the memorial aspect of the building
- and the infrastructure to support these ongoing activities, including tradesmen, contracting, finance, human resources, information technology and management.

In closing, I would like to point out that in all projects the Kennedy Center undertakes, we are guided by our goal of ensuring the Center's infrastructure is as energy and resource efficient as possible and we are committed to minimizing the effects of our operations on the environment. The mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems projects, for example, include energy-efficient upgrades; energy efficient lighting and occupancy sensors are being installed, and we have a robust recycling program.

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, I thank you for the opportunity to address you this morning. I have the remarkable privilege of overseeing one of the most exciting organizations in the world. It is a national monument to President Kennedy and a living tribute to our American cultural heritage. I am grateful for the Committee's support and partnership and I look forward to answering any questions that members of the Subcommittee may have. Thank you very much.