

## DANCE WORKER DIGEST | MARCH 2024

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By Dance/NYC

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This month's topics cover Congressional funding opportunities as well as federal legislation on small businesses, Supplemental Security Income, and predatory ticketing.

## The CREATE Act Unlocks Federal Resources for Artists and Small Businesses



The Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy (CREATE) Act is among the newest legislative efforts supporting artists and small businesses. Introduced in the Senate by Senators Brian Schatz (D-HI) and John Cornyn (R-TX), and in the House by Representatives Debbie Dingell (D-MI-12) and Gonzalez-Colon (R-Puerto Rico), the bill aims to broaden the qualifications of the Small Business Administration's (SBA) microloan program to encompass artists, arts entrepreneurs, and small businesses contributing to the creative economy.

The CREATE Act would also provide economic development assistance to state, regional and local agencies, artists, and creative workers and instruct the SBA to devise procedures for evaluating business proposals from non-employer businesses (e.g. independent contractors) and small businesses in the creative industries, among other reforms. Patreon, Etsy, and Arts Workers United are among the supporters endorsing the CREATE Act as a catalyst for the creative economy.

For dance workers, this legislation affords access to funding to support their artistic projects, productions, and businesses, as well as support for training, mentorship, networking opportunities, and other resources to grow their careers and businesses.

- [Review the full text of the CREATE Act \(S.3759\)](#)
- [Check out U.S. Senator Schatz's press release on the CREATE Act](#)

## Senator Schumer Establishes Earmark Funds to Help New York State and Local Non-Profits



Senator Schumer is currently accepting requests for Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) from state, local government entities, and non-profit organizations in New York.

This funding opportunity, also known as "Earmarks," permits Members of Congress to propose allocations for specific projects in their states within the annual federal budget, offering eligible entities a chance to secure one-time funds for their initiatives. CDS request applications must be electronically completed and submitted by Friday, April 5, 2024, at 11:59 PM ET.

Dance workers in New York can maximize their chances of securing earmark funds to support their artistic endeavors in FY25 by ensuring your eligibility and submitting your application by the deadline.

- [Learn how to submit your earmark request for FY25](#)
- [Learn more about Earmarks in Americans for the Arts Action Fund's 2024 Webinar](#)

## Representatives Call for Updating SSI Eligibility Rules for Seniors and People with Disabilities

Earlier this year, U.S. House Representatives, Raúl M. Grijalva (D-Ariz.), Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.), and Elissa Slotkin (D-Mich.) reintroduced the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Restoration Act. A key feature of the bill is to streamline SSI claims, increase asset limits, and set the minimum benefit at

100 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

As of now, SSI offers a monthly benefit amount of \$943 for an individual and \$1,415 for a couple, which is well below the federal poverty line. Over 100 organizations have endorsed the SSI Restoration Act, calling for an update of the program which has remained largely unchanged



since President Nixon signed it into law 50 years ago.

Dance workers—particularly those with disabilities or who are seniors—may rely on SSI as a crucial source of income. By streamlining the claims process, the Act would make it easier for them to access the benefits they need to support themselves financially. Additionally, increasing asset limits would allow dance workers to maintain necessary resources, such as savings or investments, without risking their eligibility for SSI benefits. Overall, the SSI Restoration Act's improvements in financial support would directly benefit dance workers by providing them with a more stable and reliable source of income.

- [Review this one-pager on the SSI Restoration Act](#)
- [Review Justice in Aging's Issue Brief on the bill](#)
- [Check out the list of organizations endorsing the SSI Restoration Act](#)

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## Bipartisan Lawmakers Advocate for Ticket Reform with Fans First Act



Last December, U.S. Senators John Cornyn (R-TX), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM), Roger Wicker (R-MS), and Peter Welch (D-VT) introduced the Fans First Act (S. 3457), formerly known as *Fix the Tix*.

The bill is the most comprehensive measure in Congress aimed at addressing predatory secondary sellers who inflate ticket prices, hurting fans and artists.

The Fans First Act has four main objectives:

- Banning speculative and counterfeit tickets
- Criminalizing deceptive marketing practices, including websites and URLs that deceive consumers into overpaying for tickets that may not grant them entry to an event
- Mandating that all ticket sellers display the complete itemized cost of the ticket, including any mandatory fees, at the onset of the transaction
- Providing clear penalties and state and federal enforcement policies

Dance/USA is partnering with national arts organizations in the [Fix The Tix Coalition](#) to endorse the Fans First Act and guarantee that dance-related companies/organizations retain flexibility as primary sellers for tickets donated back to them by charitable donors.

- [Review the legislative proposal and learn how you may benefit from it](#)
- [Learn more about the Fix The Tix Coalition](#)



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[< back](#)

[previous listing](#) • [next listing](#)