

**Artistic Freedom Initiative Releases Policy Recommendations for Biden-Harris Administration**

*International Human Rights Non-Profit Recommends Protections for Artistic Freedom of Expression and Cultural Heritage Rights*

**New York, NY:** Today, Artistic Freedom Initiative (AFI), a New York City-based non-profit led by immigration and human rights attorneys, announced the release of their Artistic Freedom and Cultural Heritage policy recommendations for the Biden-Harris administration. Through these recommendations, AFI urges the current administration to take up a comprehensive policy strategy for safeguarding cultural rights in the United States. The policies recommend interventions across areas of international diplomacy, immigration law, public education, museum, art, and university funding practice, cultural preservation, historic restoration, and diversity and inclusion throughout.

In the aforementioned documents, AFI states: “As artists around the globe are increasingly censored, imprisoned, restricted from moving freely across borders, tortured, or even killed, we recommend the following steps be taken to strengthen, promote, and protect artistic freedom at the domestic and international level. Though the United States has historically championed freedom of expression, it has yet to meet the international standards for artistic and cultural freedom established by the United Nations.”

These recommendations recall moments in American history where presidential initiatives presented unprecedented support for the arts and culture sector, specifically Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs.

The Cultural Heritage-specific recommendations recall President Biden’s promise to be “a president for all Americans.” It states, “[President Biden] has emphasized cultivating national unity, and uplifting the many diverse cultures that comprise the country he leads. He has committed to organizing a cabinet ‘that looks like America.’ However, many of the cultural traditions that define the diverse identities of this country are in urgent need of safeguarding. In the absence of adequate protections, many American communities are at risk of losing irreplaceable artistic practices that uphold and celebrate their unique cultures.”

AFI’s recommendations in the area of Cultural Heritage place special emphasis on investment in the preservation of Native American, Black, and African-American culture, through increased community involvement and representative leadership, the allocation of designated funds, and the adequate resourcing of Historically Native American and Historically Black and African-American arts, culture and educational institutions.

**About Artistic Freedom Initiative:** Dedicated to safeguarding the right to artistic freedom, AFI was founded on the notion that artists are uniquely situated to positively and powerfully effect change, provided their voices can be heard. As artists are increasingly censored, imprisoned, restricted from moving freely across borders, tortured, or even killed, it is more

critical than ever that we safeguard the right to artistic freedom and zealously champion the courageous artists who exercise it.

To this end, AFI directly assists artists who have experienced persecution, censorship, or other restrictions on their freedom of expression, and supports artists who have demonstrated a commitment to advancing progressive social change and fundamental human rights.

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