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News Release

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Wisconsin's Lieutenant Governor Barbara Lawton Receives National Arts Leadership Award

MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Arts Board proudly congratulates Lieutenant Governor Barbara Lawton on receiving the 2008 Lieutenant Governors Arts Leadership Award, presented by Americans for the Arts and the National Lieutenant Governors Association. The award honors a public official who has demonstrated outstanding leadership in the advancement of the arts at the state level. It was presented last evening at the National Lieutenant Governors Association's annual conference in Buffalo, New York.

"We have learned to look to Wisconsin for innovative models to advance the arts and the creative economy," said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. "With Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton's leadership, we see the powerful impact a state arts agency can have."

Lieutenant Governor Barbara Lawton received the 2008 Lt. Governors Arts Award for her arts advocacy in Wisconsin. Upon taking office in 2003, Lawton showed herself to be a tireless champion for the arts and arts education in Wisconsin. As chair of the Wisconsin Arts Board (WAB), Lawton engages both public and private sectors in a shared agenda to establish Wisconsin's stronghold in the creative economy. She promotes the arts and culture industry as a powerful sector in itself and as an animating force for economic growth in communities across the state.

"Our capacity for creativity and innovation will define Wisconsin's competitive position in the years ahead," Lieutenant Governor Barbara Lawton has stated. "The arts are essential to our success in a global economy, and they provide the solid foundation for rich civil discourse in a vital democracy."

In receiving the award, Lt. Governor Lawton was specifically recognized for her leadership

- to realign WAB programs and services with the Board's expanded role in economic development;
- to establish a public campaign to support that work;
- to pass tax incentives for the film, television and video game industry in Wisconsin;
- to create the Wisconsin Task Force on Arts and Creativity in Education in partnership with State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster; and
- to initiate the partnership between the NLGA and Americans for the Arts.

Americans for the Arts had already recognized Lt. Governor Lawton's WAB leadership with their invitation to represent states' interests on the Americans for the Arts' 2007 National Arts Policy Roundtable, "Thinking Creatively, Working Globally: The Role of the Arts in Building a 21st Century American Workforce" in Sundance, UT and, this month, at a national leaders' think tank on arts policy at the Aspen Institute in Aspen, CO.

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For more information please visit <http://artsboard.wisconsin.gov>, <http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org>, and <http://www.nlga.us>. For Wisconsin's arts and cultural events, please visit <http://portalwisconsin.org>.