

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 598

Recognizing the immense capacity of the popular arts to bring people together, inspire creativity and imagination, promote critical thinking, and instill the universal values of truth, justice, and equality.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 18, 2023

Mr. ROBERT GARCIA of California submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the immense capacity of the popular arts to bring people together, inspire creativity and imagination, promote critical thinking, and instill the universal values of truth, justice, and equality.

Whereas nearly 5,000,000 Americans work in the arts and cultural production industry;

Whereas the overall arts economy represents approximately 4.5 percent of the gross domestic product of the United States, or just over \$1,000,000,000,000;

Whereas both creation and production of new content across every sphere of the popular arts industry would not be possible without union labor and every artist, creator, and worker in the popular arts industry deserves well-

paying wages, representation, and to have the dignity of their work protected;

Whereas, since the debut of the television industry, the number of traditional television and home video viewers has grown over time to 5,400,000,000 in 2022 and has created \$94,000,000,000 in global revenue;

Whereas the global comic book industry today is worth more than \$9,210,000,000;

Whereas the gaming industry is worth more than \$300,000,000,000 with approximately 3,000,000,000 people worldwide playing video games and the global Esports audience set to rise above half a billion by 2024;

Whereas fantasy books, along with science fiction, generate nearly \$600,000,000 in sales each year in the United States and fantasy audiobooks hold the largest share of sales among all audiobook categories;

Whereas hundreds of annual Comic Cons all across the United States have attracted upwards of 250,000 visitors to individual conventions;

Whereas Comic Cons inject tourism and foster enormous growth, with the largest conventions injecting upwards of \$100,000,000 into their local economies;

Whereas the lineage of comics and other visual popular arts has been traced by academics to word-image texts that evolved from cave paintings, Egyptian hieroglyphs, Mayan carvings, illuminated manuscripts, the Bayeux Tapestry, early woodcut printing, the serial illustrations of William Hogarth and Rodolphe Töpffer, and the engravings of William Blake;

Whereas superheroes entered the world of comic books in 1938 with the release of “Action Comics No. 1” and the debut of “Superman”;

Whereas works include Art Spiegelman’s graphic novel, “Maus” (1980–1986), which won the Pulitzer Prize and Congressman and civil rights hero John Lewis’ National Book Award-winning “March” which was, itself, inspired by a 1958 comic “Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story”;

Whereas the most valuable comic book to-date remains the first edition of “Action Comics”, considered by many to be the first proper comic book to come into existence, which was sold for \$3,200,000 in 2022 after going for 10 cents a piece in 1938;

Whereas, in 2020, graphic novels made up 67 percent of the children’s book market in the United States;

Whereas comic books and the popular arts are a valuable literary tool for helping educate millions of children allowing them to learn English and other languages; and

Whereas the Library of Congress has more than 140,000 issues of about 13,000 comic-book titles and is the largest comic book collection in the world: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes the immense capacity of the pop-
3 ular arts to bring people together, inspire creativity
4 and imagination, promote critical thinking, and in-
5 still the universal values of truth, justice, and equal-
6 ity;

1 (2) honors the unique impact of the popular
2 arts on generations of Americans and the broader
3 global community; and

4 (3) recognizes the importance of promoting the
5 popular arts to broader audiences and advancing in-
6 creased representation within all forms of the pop-
7 ular arts.

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