



2026 Congressional Art Competition

Guidelines & Information

Theme

The theme for the 2026 Congressional Art Competition is “**Celebrating 250 Years of America**”.

Eligibility

High school students (grades 9-12) residing in or attending public, private and home schools located in the 26th Congressional District are eligible to participate in the 2026 contest. (Note: You may verify addresses here: [Find Your Representative | house.gov](https://www.house.gov/representatives).)

Awards

First Place Winner: The artwork selected for First Place will represent Texas' 26th Congressional District and will be displayed for an entire year in the U.S. Capitol. The exhibit hallway in the Canon HOB Tunnel is traveled daily by Members of Congress, their staff, and thousands of visitors who view the artwork from congressional districts throughout the country. Each piece is highlighted with the congressional district, title of the artwork and the name of the student artist. The 26th District winner and one parent/guardian will be invited to see the unveiling of their artwork at the national reception and exhibition in Washington, D.C. on June 25, 2026. Congressman Gill’s staff will arrange a tour of the U.S. Capitol for the First Place Winner and their parent/guardian. (Note: Travel expenses are the responsibility of the winner’s family.)

In addition, the First Place Winner’s artwork will be featured on the House.gov Congressional Art Competition page and the Congressional Institute’s website.

The First Place Winner's artwork will be posted on Congressman Gill's website on the Congressional Art Competition page and announced on his social media sites.

Each district's First Place Winner will be sent a copy of the full-color book that exhibits all of the artworks of district winners from across the country.

Second Place Winner: The Second Place Winner's artwork will be displayed in Congressman Gill's Capitol Hill office for one year.

Third Place Winner: The Third Place Winner's artwork will be displayed in Congressman Gill's Flower Mound district office for one year.

All student artists submitting artwork in this year's competition will receive a **"Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition"**.

****Submitting Entries****

Students wishing to participate in this year's contest must submit their entries digitally along with a completed **Student Information and Release Form, signed by the student, parent and a teacher.** **The entries should be submitted via email to TX26RSVP@mail.house.gov, and the submission deadline is 5:00 PM on Monday, March 23, 2026.** Each student is allowed to submit one entry. Electronic images must not exceed 6 MB (megabytes) and must be in JPEG format.

Please label your images in the following manner:

StudentLastName_StudentFirstName_ArtworkTitle_Medium_HighSchool.jpg.

Example: Doe_John_My Mother's Hands_Pencil_American High School.jpg

Note: Each artwork submitted MUST BE accompanied by a completed Student Information and Release Form. Any artwork submitted that does not have the required documentation will not be accepted.

Student Information and Release Form

The typed Student Information and Release Form MUST be signed by the student, a parent or guardian, and a teacher. The information requested on the first page of the form should be provided as thoroughly as possible. Students should include their mailing addresses if they differ from their home addresses.

Students should also include contact information that will be valid for several years. (Note: Students who are seniors should include a personal email address rather than a school email address that will expire at the end of their senior year.)

The first page requires a description of the artwork, which should detail how the artwork illustrates this year's theme "Celebrating 250 Years of America" and clearly identify the major elements of the work. The second page of the form contains legal releases and a certification that the artwork is original in design and execution. The student, a parent or guardian, and a teacher must sign where appropriate. **Entries without signed originality certifications and artwork releases will not be accepted.**

Size Restrictions

- ONLY two-dimensional media is accepted. Artwork that does not meet these guidelines will be disqualified. Each piece can be no larger than 26" x 26" x 4" (26 inches high, 26 inches wide, and 4 inches deep), including the frame, and must adhere to the size/weight guidelines.
- No more than 15 pounds in weight (including the frame).

Acceptable Media

Work entered must be in the original medium (i.e., not a scanned reproduction of a painting, drawing, etc.). Acceptable media are:

- Paintings: oil, acrylics, watercolor, etc.
- Drawings: colored pencil, pencil, ink, marker, pastels, charcoal (Charcoal and pastel must be fixed.)
- Collages: must be two dimensional
- Prints: lithographs, silkscreen, block prints
- Mixed Media: use of more than two mediums such as pencil, ink, watercolor, etc.
- Computer-generated art
- Photographs

Each entry must be **original** in concept, design, and execution and may not violate U.S. copyright laws. Any entry copied from an existing photo or image (including a painting, graphic, or advertisement) created by someone other than the student violates competition rules and **will not** be accepted. For more information on copyrights, we recommend you visit: <https://www.artandwriting.org/awards/how-to-enter/copyright-plagiarism/>.

The winning artwork will hang in the Cannon HOB Tunnel to the U.S. Capitol for the entire year of the exhibition (June 2026 – May 2027 and cannot be returned to the students earlier. The First Place Winner's artwork will be retained for one year.

Students should only submit artwork they will not need for other purposes. In addition, artwork selected as the Second Place and Third Place will be displayed for one year in Congressman Gill's offices and cannot be returned to the student earlier.

2026 Competition Calendar

- Monday, March 23, by 5:00 PM: Submission deadline for student's digital artwork.
- **Monday, April 6 - Friday, April 10**: All qualified submissions will be posted in a virtual gallery on Congressman Gill's website: <http://gill.house.gov>. A local art jurist will review the submitted artwork and select the **First Place, Second Place and Third Place Winners**.
- Monday, April 20: All winners will be announced via email to students and posted on Congressman Gill's website and posted to social media.
- Monday, May 4, by 5:00 PM: It will be the responsibility of all winners' school districts to frame the winning artworks according to competition guidelines and deliver to Congressman Gill's Flower Mound district office. The completed ORIGINAL Student Information and Release Form must accompany each framed artwork. Congressman Gill's staff will package and arrange shipment of the First and Second Place Winner's artwork to Washington, D.C. His staff will also hang the Third Place Winner's artwork in Congressman Gill's Flower Mound district office.
- Early June: The First Place Winner will be contacted with detailed information regarding arrangements to attend the national reception and exhibition in Washington, DC.

Suitability Guidelines

Artwork must adhere to the policy of the House Office Building Commission (the Commission). In accordance with this policy, exhibits depicting subjects of contemporary political controversy or a sensationalistic or gruesome nature are not allowed. Each Member of Congress will be required to submit a Letter of Support confirming that the Member has determined that the winning artwork adheres to the Commission's policy. However, if another Member of Congress requests review of any artwork for compliance with the Commission's policy, the final decision regarding the artwork's suitability for display will be made by the Commission. While it is not the intent to censor any artwork, we do wish to avoid artwork that is potentially inappropriate for display in this highly travelled area leading to the Capitol.

Framing Guidelines for First Place, Second Place and Third Place Winners

The First Place, Second Place and Third Place Winners' school districts will be responsible for framing the winning artworks according to the stated competition guidelines. These artworks must be delivered to Congressman Gill's Flower Mound district office no later than 5:00 PM on May 2nd. The completed ORIGINAL Student Information and Release Form must accompany each framed artwork.

U.S. Congressman Brandon Gill

Representing Texas' 26th District



District Office

600 Parker Square Rd, Suite 205

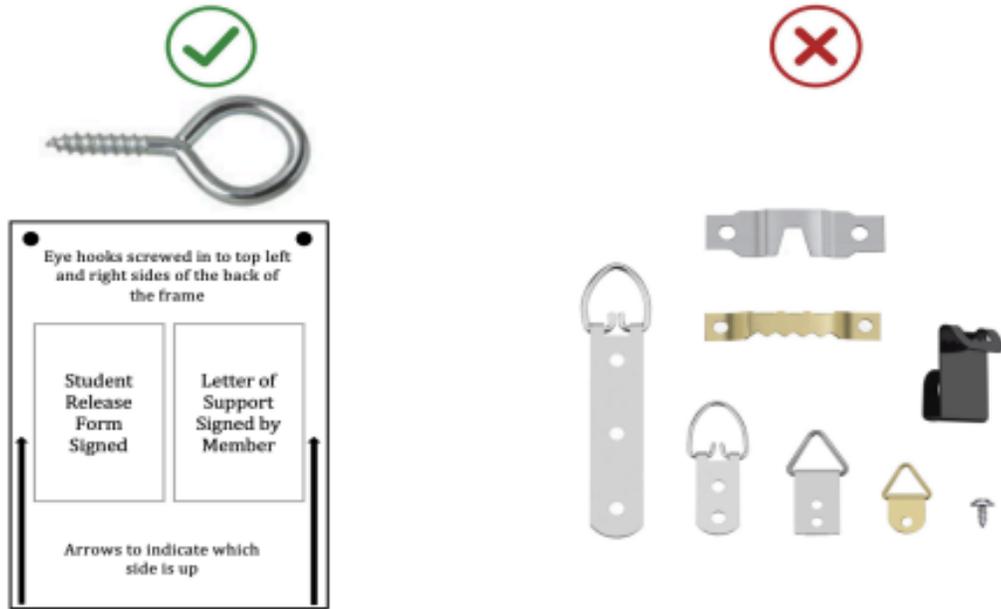
Flower Mound, TX 75028

Phone: 972-966-5454

All winning artwork must be protected by a sturdy frame. Frames must be made of wood or metal. No plastic “snap on” or metal frames that can easily come apart are to be used. All artwork, except paintings in oil or acrylic on canvas, must be protected by Plexiglas or glass. Plexiglas is preferred.

Matting can enhance or detract from a work of art and should be carefully selected.

The artwork will be hung from vertical wires. Two sturdy screw-in eye hooks must be attached at the top left and right sides of the back of the frame for hanging to prevent the work from leaning forward or hanging unevenly. Do not attach wire between the eye hooks.



Do not attach labels, ribbons, etc., to the front of the piece or underneath the glass or Plexiglas. Please indicate which side is up by marking arrows pointing towards the top on the back.

Questions

If you have any questions, please contact Grace Martin in Congressman Gill’s Flower Mound district office: Phone: 972-966-5454 or email: Grace.Martin@mail.house.gov.