

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 23, 2009

Support Funding for the Humanities

The Interior and Environment Appropriations Subcommittee has advised us that a NEH funding increase is a programmatic request (not an earmark) and that co-signing this letter will not require a certification form.

Dear Colleague,

As leaders of the Congressional Humanities Caucus, we are writing to ask you to join us in sending the attached letter to Chairman Norm Dicks and Ranking Member Michael Simpson of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee to request increased funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for fiscal year (FY) 2010.

NEH is the single most important source of support for the humanities and plays a vital role in the preservation and promotion of our national identity. All sectors of our country's education enterprise – research universities, small private institutions, state colleges, and community colleges – use NEH grants to conserve and nurture America's heritage, bring the humanities to the community, and educate the next generation of Americans.

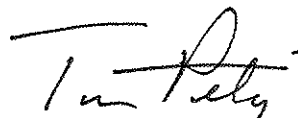
For fiscal year (FY) 2010, we are requesting **\$230 million for NEH**. This funding level would represent a \$75 million increase over the FY 2009 enacted level and would bolster the competitive grant programs and assistance to state humanities councils. It would allow for parity with the NSF grants success rate and provide resources for essential unmet needs. Our ability to meet the challenges of today and the future depends on a solid foundation in the humanities. It is therefore critical that the federal government continue to invest in NEH.

For more information or to sign onto the letter, please contact Kate Roetzer with Rep. David Price (5-1784 or kate.roetzer@mail.house.gov) or Lindsay Punzenberger with Rep. Thomas Petri (5-5406 or Lindsay.punzenberger@mail.house.gov). **The deadline to sign the letter is Wednesday, April 1.**

Sincerely,



David Price
Co-Chair
Congressional Humanities Caucus



Thomas E. Petri
Co-Chair
Congressional Humanities Caucus

April XX, 2009

The Honorable Norman D. Dicks
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment & Related Agencies
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael Simpson
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment & Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Dicks and Ranking Member Simpson:

We are writing to urge the Subcommittee \$230 million in funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 in an effort towards restoring funding for NEH to the FY 1994 level of \$258 million, adjusted for inflation. This \$75 million increase over the FY 2009 enacted level would help to address essential needs in humanities education and research.

Even with the relatively small amount of funding provided to the endowment, NEH is the single most important source of support for the humanities. Each year, NEH grants support strengthened institutional capacity, jobs, and professional development for thousands of scholars, educators, curators, librarians, public historians, museum professionals, filmmakers and others around the country. Their work is at the heart of efforts to conserve and nurture America's heritage, bring the humanities to the community, and educate the next generation of Americans.

Unfortunately, current demand for humanities project support far exceeds funding available. Each year, as billions of dollars are rightfully invested in research and education in science and technology, the relative federal investment in the humanities falls further behind. In FY 2008, only 16% of competitive, peer-reviewed project proposals were funded, compared to a 26% funding rate for merit-reviewed projects at the National Science Foundation. We cannot allow this gap to continue to grow. The requested increase would help close the opportunity gap by providing \$40 million for national competitive humanities grant programs, creating parity in the success rate of humanities and science-based grants.

This request would also bolster support for the state humanities councils, which work in partnership with the NEH to reach millions of Americans each year through teacher institutes, literacy initiatives, programs on local history and culture, and support for local cultural and educational groups, community groups, and scholars. A recent survey of state humanities council resources and capacities reveals that councils would need an additional \$150 million to meet the need for programs and infrastructure support in their states. With the requested additional funds, state humanities councils would receive \$25 million for operating grants to expand their reach and address unmet needs.

Increased funding would also provide about \$10 million for NEH to introduce or expand support in several areas where federal leadership is critically needed, such as international education and global society perspectives (at all levels of learning), digital humanities projects, graduate education, and data collection and dissemination of information on the state of the humanities.

We are aware of the many difficult choices your Subcommittee faces in crafting its FY 2010 bill, especially in our current economic downturn, but we believe that strong federal support for the humanities is an important investment in the lives of our fellow citizens, the well-being of our democracy, and our nation's continued status as a world leader. As the legislation that established the NEH forty years ago states, "An advanced civilization must not limit its efforts to science and technology alone, but must give full value and support to the other great branches of scholarly and cultural activity in order to achieve a better understanding of the past, a better analysis of the present, and a better view of the future."

We appreciate your past support of NEH and urge you to provide a robust increase in FY 2010 funding for the endowment to advance the nation's study and understanding of history, literature, foreign language, and other subject in this diverse and essential field of study.

Sincerely,