

April 30, 2010

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Capitol, S-128
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Capitol, S-128
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Diane Feinstein
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment and Related Agencies
SD-131
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment and Related Agencies
SH-125
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairmen Inouye, Vice Chair Cochran, Chairman Feinstein, and Ranking Member Alexander:

We write to express appreciation for your continued support for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and to urge you to support a funding level of \$232.5 million for the NEH in the FY 2011 Interior Appropriations bill with \$144 million for NEH National Programs and \$60 million for the NEH Federal/State Partnership. Such federal support for the humanities promotes creativity and expands cultural, educational, and economic opportunities in communities across the United States.

The NEH is one of the largest and most important sources of support for professional development for many scholars, educators, curators, librarians, historians and filmmakers. Their efforts preserve heritage, strengthen our civic institutions, and educate Americans to address the challenges in a constantly changing world, but current funding for humanities projects does not meet current demand. In FY09, the NEH received more than 4,000 competitive project proposals totaling more than \$400 million in requested funding, but was only able to award 16.9% of these proposals. The requested increase in FY11 funding would help to close the gap by providing new funding for NEH national programs to increase the award rate for peer-reviewed project proposals, introduce new support for humanities data, and support a new, competitively-awarded graduate-student faculty program. Funding would also support state humanities councils who work in partnership with the NEH to reach millions of Americans each year through teacher institutes, family literacy programs, and thousands of other programs that educate citizens in communities throughout the nation.

Thanks to your leadership, the NEH received \$167.5 million in funding in FY10. We urge you to continue to support federal funding of the humanities, and request that you increase funding for the NEH to \$232.5 million in this year's Interior Appropriations bill. This support of the NEH will help to advance the study and understanding of diverse cultures, history, language, and literature in communities across the country.

Thank you for your attention to our request. We look forward to working with you on this and the other important issues facing our nation.

Sincerely,