

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)

Agency Description

The National Endowment for the Humanities (www.neh.gov) is an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1965. As one of the largest funders of humanities programs in the United States, NEH provides critical support for research, education, preservation, and public programs in the humanities through grants to a wide range of educational institutions, non-profit organizations, and individual scholars nationwide.

Action Needed

The National Humanities Alliance urges Congress to provide FY 2012 funding for NEH of no less than \$155 million, the FY 2011 enacted level, and the same amount recommended by the Senate Appropriations Committee. NEH was already cut in FY 2011, and is still rebuilding from nearly 40% cuts suffered in the mid-1990s. We are especially concerned about the continued erosion of funding for the NEH core programs, which fund competitive grants for nonprofit institutions and scholars nationwide.

- [Chart: NEH Appropriations History \(Adjusted for Inflation\), FY 1966-2012](#) (pdf)
- [Chart: NEH Appropriations Tracking \(Division-Level Funding Detail\), FY 2010-2012](#) (pdf)

FY 2011 Funding Status: \$155 million [Enacted April 15, 2011]

The 2011 Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act (H.R. 1473) was signed into law on April 15, 2011. It provided (approximately) \$155 million for NEH in FY 2011. This amount was then reduced by a government-wide rescission of 0.2 percent, resulting in a final budget level for NEH of \$154.69 million. NEH funding for the current year represents a decrease of \$12.81 million (or about 7.6%) below the FY 2010 appropriation of \$167.5 million. [Bill Text: [P.L. 112-10](#)]

FY 2012 Funding Status: Pending

President's Budget Proposal: \$146.3 million [OMB Release- February 14, 2011]

For FY 2012, the President has requested \$146.3 million for NEH, an \$8.39 million (or 5.4%) cut from the FY 2011 level. If enacted, this would result in a 13% cut to NEH over a two-year period (FY 2010-2012).

[Full Text: [NEH Budget Request for FY 2012](#)]

Latest House Action: \$135 million [Full Committee Vote- July 13, 2011]

The FY 2012 Interior and Related Agencies spending bill (H.R. 2584), as approved by the House Appropriations Committee on July 13, provides funding of only \$135 million for NEH. The House mark is \$19.7 million less than the FY 2011 enacted level, and \$11.3 million below the President's Request for FY 2012. The House bill marks a disproportionate decrease of 13% for NEH compared to the overall House Interior bill, which was reduced by 7% from FY 2011 levels. The House began, but did not complete, floor debate on HR 2584 in August. [Bill Text: [H.R. 2584](#) / [H.Rept. 112-151](#)]

Latest Senate Action: \$155 million [Subcommittee Draft- October 14, 2011]

On October 14, the Senate Appropriations Committee released draft text of a bipartisan FY 2012 Interior spending bill. The measure provides FY 2012 funding of \$155 million for NEH, roughly the same amount enacted for FY 2011. The Senate level is \$20 million above the House mark and \$8.7 million above the level proposed by the Administration.

[Committee Print: [Draft Bill Text](#) / [Table](#)]

NEH Annual Appropriations, FY 2008 to Present (in millions of dollars)

Fiscal Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Budget Request	141.4	144.4	171.3*	161.3	146.3
Appropriation	144.7	155.0	167.5	154.69	n/a

*The FY10 Budget Request included \$10 million to transfer the NCACA program to NEH (not approved by Congress).

Committee Jurisdiction

Appropriations: [House Subcommittee on Interior, Environment & Related Agencies](#); [Senate Subcommittee on Interior, Environment & Related Agencies](#)

Authorization: [House Committee on Education & the Workforce, Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training](#); [Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions](#)

Authorization [Last Reauthorization Enacted November 5, 1990]

The NEH was established by the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act of 1965 (P.L. 89-209). NEH was last reauthorized through the 1991 Department of Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (H.R. 5769), specifically Title I of the Act, "Amendments to the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965", also referred to as the "Arts, Humanities, and Museums Amendments of 1990". [Bill text: [P.L. 101-512](#)]

Additional Resources

- [Talking Points in Support of NEH Funding](#)
- [NEH Grant Awards by State](#)
- [Highlights of NEH Investments](#) (NEH website)