

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 20, 2020

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment & Related Agencies
2007 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

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

Dear Chairwoman McCollum and Ranking Member Joyce:

We are writing to thank the Subcommittee for its past support of funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and respectfully request your support of a funding level of at least \$170 million in the Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) Interior, Environment & Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

As you know, NEH is the main source of federal support for humanities research, teaching, preservation, public programming, and related activities in the U.S., providing competitive grant funding for research and scholarship in history, literature, foreign languages, and other fields that empower individuals in every congressional district with critical perspective and knowledge. Furthermore, NEH funding allocated through state humanities councils strengthens the cultural infrastructure of local communities in every state and territory throughout the nation.

Additionally, investment in the humanities advances vital national interests by fostering a globally competitive workforce, strengthening civic engagement, preserving our cultural heritage, and protecting our national security. As our world becomes increasingly more interconnected, building a solid foundation in the humanities becomes even more critical, which is why the majority of our CIA analysts, State Department officials and staff members and diplomats at embassies across the globe are graduates of the humanities – as are leaders ranging from the late Steve Jobs to former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey.

NEH has been an excellent steward of its annual federal appropriation, successfully leveraging more than \$4.8 billion in non-federal support (adjusted for inflation) between 1965 and 2014. Following Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria in 2017, the NEH awarded nearly \$2 million to organizations throughout the Gulf South and Puerto Rico. Funding preserved a John Biggers mural housed by the Blue Triangle Multi-Cultural Association in Texas and salvaged water-damaged architectural features at Vizcaya, an estate and museum in Florida. Nationally, summer institutes and seminars for K–12 educators provide teachers with a deeper understanding of history and culture while helping them develop new teaching methods. In the past five years alone, these programs have reached more than 11,000 teachers, ultimately enriching the classroom experience for an estimated 2 million students. Through its *Dialogues on the Experience of*

War programs, the NEH also brings together veterans and civilians to reflect on powerful literature and art to foster healing and discussion.

We understand the many difficult choices your Subcommittee faces in constructing its FY 2021 bill, but we believe that strong federal investments in the humanities are crucial for preserving America's place as a world leader in education and innovation as well as provide our nation's citizenry and workforce with the foundation necessary to tackle the challenges of today's globalized world. As billions of dollars are rightfully invested in research, education, science, and technology, we must continue to prioritize robust federal investment in the humanities. We appreciate your past support of NEH and strongly urge your support for this request.

Sincerely,



DAVID E. PRICE

Co-Chair Congressional Humanities Caucus



STEVE STIVERS

Co-Chair Congressional Humanities Caucus

**National Endowment for the Humanities FY21 Funding
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