

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 31, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Capitol, S-128
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Capitol, S-128
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Subcommittee on the Department of the Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Capitol, S-128
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairman Leahy, and Chairman Murkowski,

We write today to express our steadfast support for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). For more than 50 years, the NEA and NEH have promoted educational and cultural experiences that generate tremendous economic returns for communities in every single state in the country. We urge you to honor this legacy by rejecting any attempt by the Administration's budget proposal to eliminate or drastically cut the NEA and NEH. Instead we urge you to support funding of not less than \$149.8 million for each of the NEA and NEH for fiscal year 2018.

Since its creation in 1965, the NEH has funded groundbreaking scholarly research, preserved essential cultural and educational resources, cataloged more than 63 million pages of our nation's historic newspapers, and helped millions of young people grapple with the lessons of history.

Also established in 1965, the NEA supports art and education programs across the country. Access to the arts for all Americans is a core principle of the Endowment. The majority of NEA grants go to small and medium-sized organizations, and a significant percentage of grants fund programs in high-poverty communities.

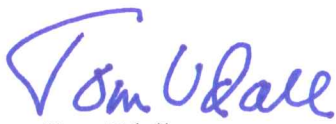
NEA and NEH serve as an important economic driver at the community level. The arts generate tourism and employ more than 4 million people in the creative industries nationally. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that the arts and culture sector is a \$704 billion industry, or 4.2 percent of the nation's GDP. The nonprofit arts industry alone generates \$135 billion in economic activity annually and generates \$22.3 billion in government revenue. Arts and humanities education are critical to prepare our students for the innovative thinking required in the 21st century workplace. Finally, every federal dollar spent on arts initiatives sparks funding collaborations that leverage more than nine non-federal dollars from collaborations with private foundations.

As an example of the tremendous value NEA and NEH provide nationwide, both agencies offer healing programs for those who serve in our Armed Services and their families, as well as veterans reintegrating into civilian life. The NEH's Warriors Scholar Project provides an "academic boot camp" for veterans entering or returning to college. Since 2012, the NEH program has served more than 500 veterans. The NEA's Military Healing Arts Partnership provides art therapy for active-duty military patients and their

families to improve communication, process traumatic events, and improve neurological and physical function. The program started at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and has now expanded to 11 other facilities across the country, including in Alaska, California, Colorado, Florida, North Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Kentucky and Tennessee. A new telehealth site will soon extend the reach of the program to rural areas and other military facilities.

Thanks to your continued leadership, the NEA and NEH play a vital role in every state. We urge you to continue to support federal funding of the arts and humanities in fiscal year 2018 at a funding level of not less than \$149.8 million for each of NEA and NEH. We appreciate your attention to this matter, and we look forward to working with you on this and other important issues facing our nation.

Sincerely,



Tom Udall
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Al Franken
United States Senator



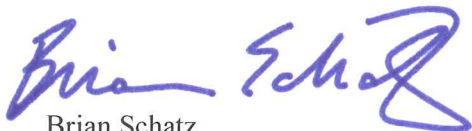
Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



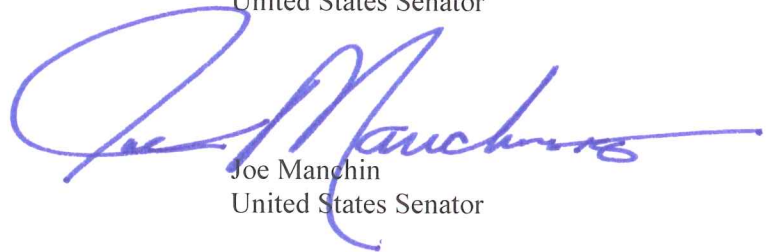
Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Brian Schatz
United States Senator



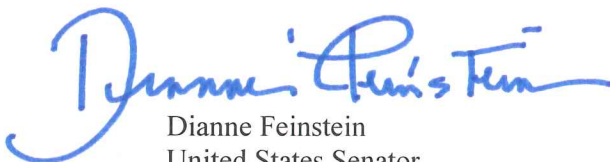
Joe Manchin
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



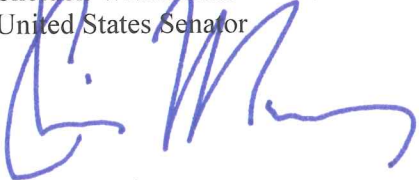
Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



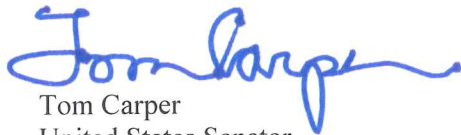
Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



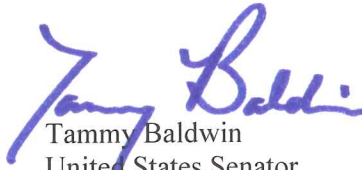
Chris Murphy
United States Senator



Tom Carper
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



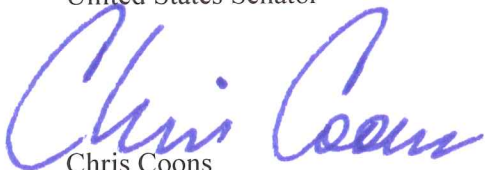
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



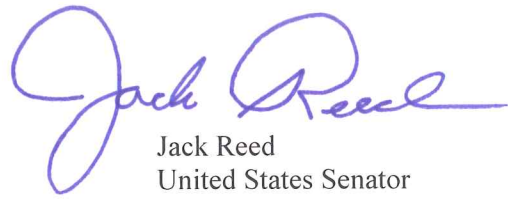
Maggie Hassan
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Chris Coons
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



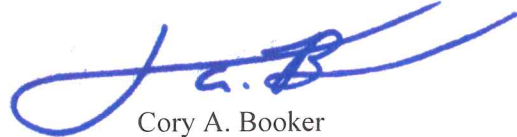
Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Ed Markey
United States Senator



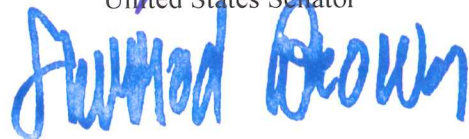
Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



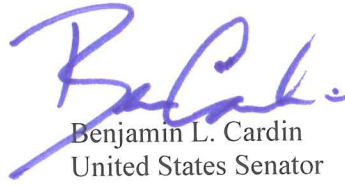
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



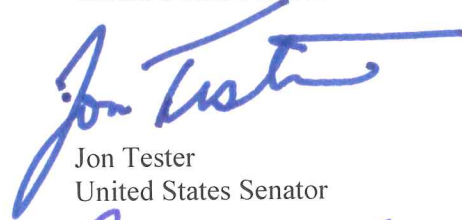
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



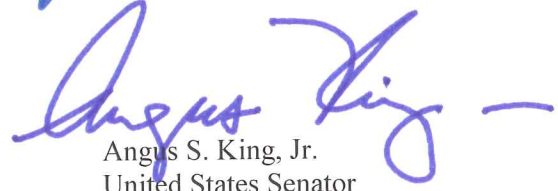
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



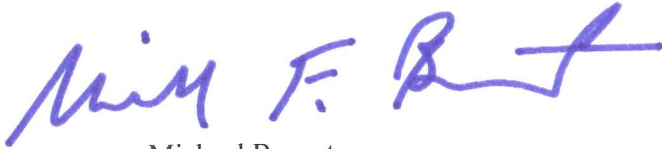
Jon Tester
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



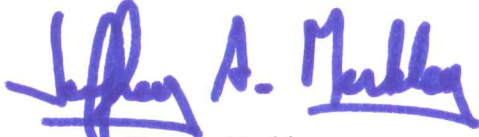
Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Michael Bennet
United States Senator



Bill Nelson
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator