

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 21, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Michael McDonald
Acting Chair
National Endowment for the Humanities
400 7th St SW,
Washington, D.C. 20219

Dear President Trump & Acting Chair McDonald,

We write to express our deep concern about the future of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the only entity – federal or private – tasked with making the humanities accessible to all Americans. Overnight, on April 2, 2025, the NEH terminated all current five-year General Operating Support grants awarded to state and jurisdictional humanities councils. This funding provides the majority of operating support for state humanities council partners of NEH. The administration is also targeting NEH with the aim of terminating more than 1,400 other grant awards, substantially reducing its staff, and eliminating many of the agency’s previously announced grant programs.¹ Such actions will have a devastating impact on museums, historic sites, universities, educators, libraries, public television and radio stations, research institutions, and local humanities programming throughout our nation.

NEH was established by Congress in 1965 and reaffirmed by Republican and Democratic Administrations and lawmakers over the last 60 years.² Congress has repeatedly supported the NEH, its state humanities councils, and their effective service and distribution of federal dollars across the country. Over the course of its history, NEH has awarded over \$6 billion to support research, education, preservation, and public programming in the humanities.³ For example, NEH funding has been instrumental in advancing groundbreaking research at universities, enriching our shared cultural experiences—from the King Tut exhibition to Ken Burns’s award-winning documentaries—and uncovering our nation’s history, including excavations at Jamestown, Virginia, and the preservation and publication of Mark Twain’s writings.

A shift in the federal government’s “fiscal priorities,” as NEH’s message to grantees states, does not justify withdrawing these funds. Congress has already appropriated them, and federal law requires that grantees receive support for the full duration of their grants, absent proof of misuse. We urge the NEH to abide by federal law and honor their agreements with grantees and humanities councils.

For over 60 years, NEH staff have helped grantees, from individuals to museums and nonprofits, provide high-quality humanities programs to communities across the country, including 56 state and jurisdictional humanities councils. NEH funds, allocated to state humanities councils, are for local use and allow councils to leverage \$2 in private investment for every federal dollar spent.⁴ The loss of NEH funding to humanities councils will

¹ <https://impact.ach.org/>

² <https://www.neh.gov/about/history/national-foundation-arts-and-humanities-act-1965-pl-89-209>

³ <https://www.neh.gov/>

⁴ <https://www.statehumanities.org/>

decimate the ability of these nonprofits to serve localities in their states, eliminating programs that are essential to each state's cultural infrastructure. This will lead to significant job loss in communities that are the most vulnerable to the lack of federal support.

Libraries, museums, historic sites, and community centers in rural communities and small towns face particularly dire financial futures without grant funding from state humanities councils and the NEH. Additionally, small and midsize organizations benefit from the guidance and expertise of the agency. These organizations are the backbone of our communities' unique cultures, reinforcing civic participation, community engagement, historic preservation, tourism infrastructure, and economic development. In short, they articulate a deep sense of place essential for a high quality of life.

The NEH and the state humanities councils are also an integral part of our nation's plans to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in 2026. They will give families and individuals an opportunity to participate in our national celebration in their own communities and highlight local stories and contributions. Without NEH's leadership and investment, the scope and impact of this national milestone will be dramatically diminished, leaving many regions without the resources needed to meaningfully take part.

NEH's budget for the Fiscal Year 2025 is \$207 million, a tiny fraction of the federal budget. These cuts will not provide significant savings for the federal government nor the American taxpayer, but they will impact millions who benefit from the far-reaching humanities programs, including our veterans, students, educators, and seniors. We urge the Administration to reconsider this decision. Supporting the NEH is not merely an investment in cultural preservation; it is also a crucial investment in community health, education, social development, and economic vitality.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to working with you to ensure sustained federal support for the NEH.

Sincerely,



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Jack Reed
United States Senator



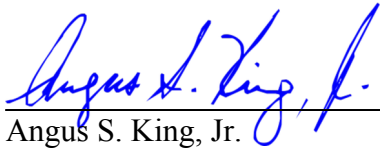
Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



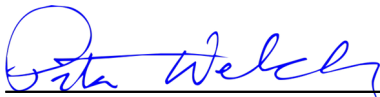
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



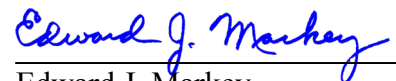
Peter Welch
United States Senator



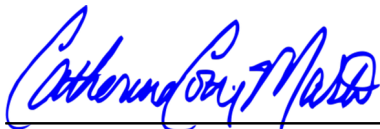
Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



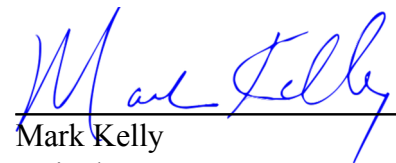
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator



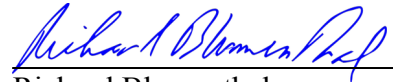
Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



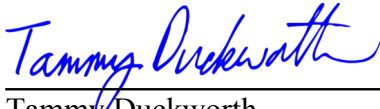
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



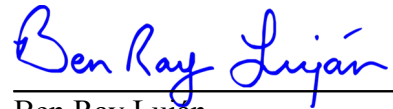
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



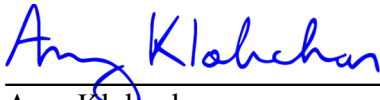
Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



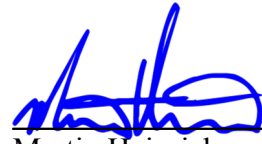
Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



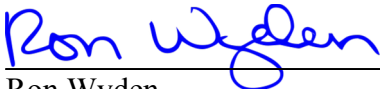
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



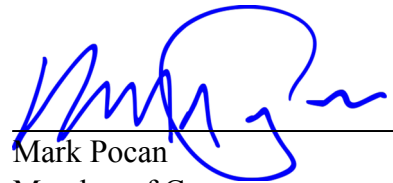
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



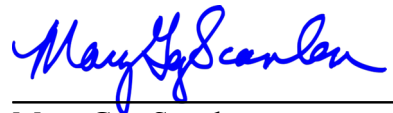
Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



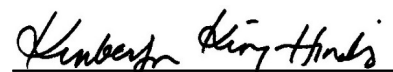
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



Kimberlyn King-Hinds
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



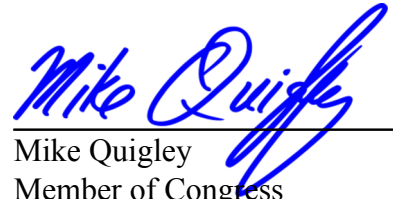
Ed Case
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



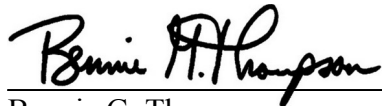
Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



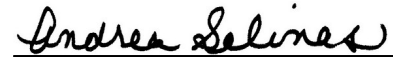
Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



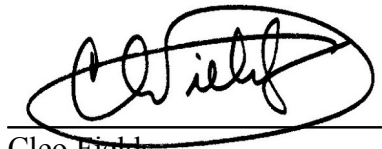
André Carson
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



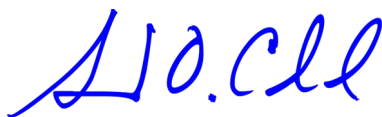
Andrea Salinas
Member of Congress



Cleo Fields
Member of Congress



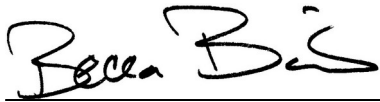
Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



Maxine Dexter
Member of Congress



Becca Balint
Member of Congress



Sarah McBride
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



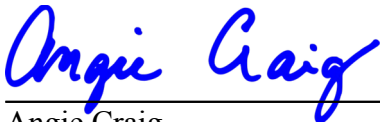
Troy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress



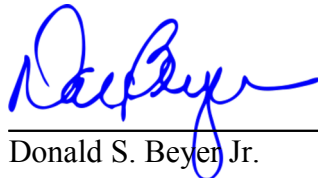
Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



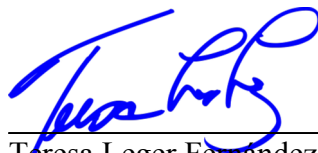
Angie Craig
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Valerie P. Foushee
Member of Congress



Teresa Leger Fernandez
Member of Congress



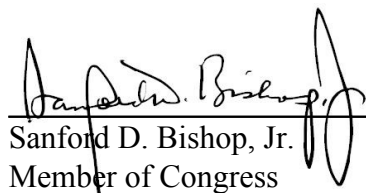
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



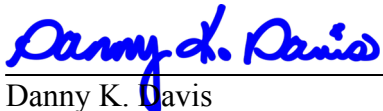
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress




Jim Tokuda
Member of Congress



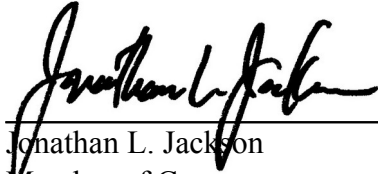
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



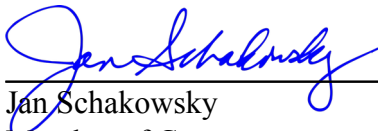
Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress




Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



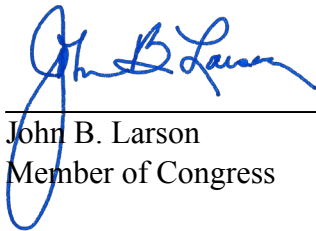
Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



MARK TAKANO
Member of Congress



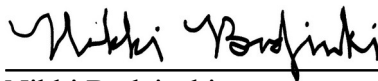
Bradley Scott Schneider
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress



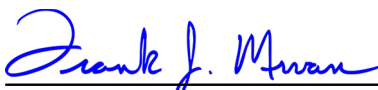
Eric Sorensen
Member of Congress



Nikki Budzinski
Member of Congress



Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress



Frank J. Mrvan
Member of Congress



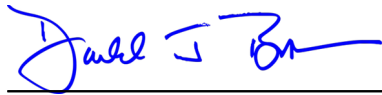
Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress



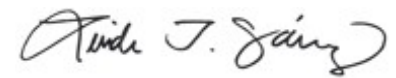
Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



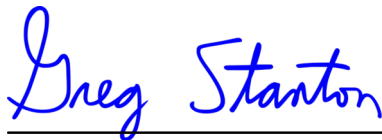
Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Don Bacon
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress



Greg Stanton
Member of Congress



Bill Foster
Member of Congress



Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress



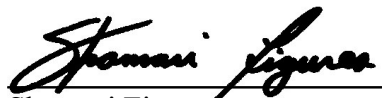
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



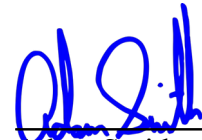
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress




Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress



Shomari Figures
Member of Congress



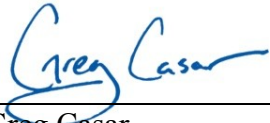
Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress



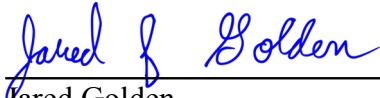
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Greg Casar
Member of Congress



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



Jared Golden
Member of Congress



Greg Landsman
Member of Congress



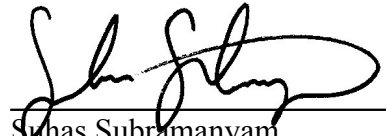
Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress



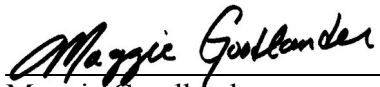
David Scott
Member of Congress



Chris Deluzio
Member of Congress



Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress



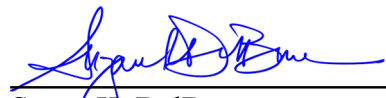
Maggie Goodlander
Member of Congress



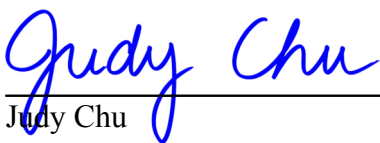
Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



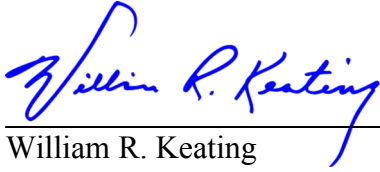
Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress



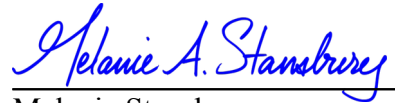
William R. Keating
Member of Congress



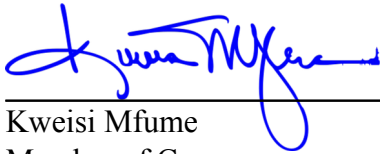
Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



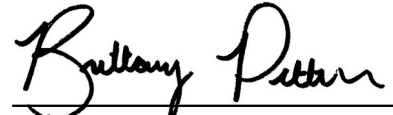
Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress



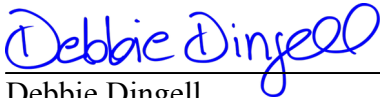
Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



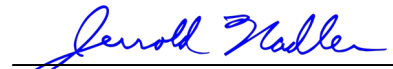
Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



Brittany Pettersen
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



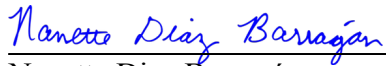
Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



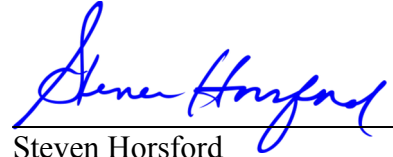
Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Steven Horsford
Member of Congress
Nevada's Fourth Congressional
District



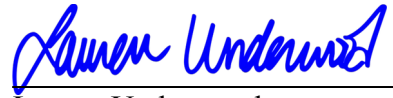
Lucy McBath
Member of Congress



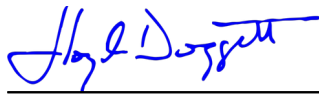
Donald G. Davis
Member of Congress



Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



Lauren Underwood
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



Gabe Amo
Member of Congress



Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress



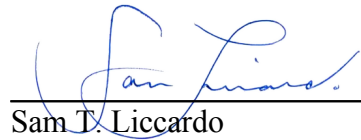
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Julie Johnson
Member of Congress



Sam T. Liccardo
Member of Congress



Pablo José Hernández
Member of Congress