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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4708

March 30, 2017

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum:


Thank you for your past support of funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). I encourage you to continue to support strong funding for the NEH in the Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18) Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Throughout the nation, the state humanities councils are an important investment in America's local and cultural infrastructure and contribute to the quality of life and desirability of our cities and towns. Through support for local historical and cultural events, veterans programs, civic education, book fairs, family reading and literacy programs, museum exhibits, library programs, teacher institutes, cultural tourism and related activities, the 56 state humanities councils enhance the lives of millions of Americans each year. Their programs invigorate local economies by contributing to a skilled and educated workforce and help make communities appealing places to live and work.

In 2015, councils reached over 5,300 communities – rural, suburban and urban – in nearly every Congressional district. Councils partnered with more than 9,200 local organizations and with these partners served over 44 million people through in-person events and 120 million through virtual events. In Washington's 8th Congressional District, the state humanities council served over 5,300 of my constituents over the past two years alone. My constituents have benefited from programming such as the Speaker's Bureau that offers free public presentations on our history, politics and culture, as well as the Poet Laureate, and Prime Time Reading program which helps at-risk children and families learn the importance of reading together. The Talking Service program supported through the NEH has especially helped returning service men and women in my district to connect with other veterans and adjust to civilian life.

I understand the many difficult decisions before you as you begin to craft the FY18 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. I encourage you to remember the important role the NEH plays in strengthening our communities and creating a well-informed, culturally aware, and engaged citizenry, and ask that you provide strong funding for the NEH in Fiscal Year 2018.

Sincerely,



DAVE REICHERT
Member of Congress