March 22, 2016

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment & Related Agencies
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment & Related Agencies
2256 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum:

We are writing to thank the Subcommittee for its past support of funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and to respectfully request your support of a funding level of $155 million in the Fiscal Year 2017 (FY17) Interior Appropriations bill.

As you know, NEH is the primary source of federal support for humanities research, teaching, preservation, public programming, and related activities in the U.S. The Endowment provides competitive grant funding for research and scholarship in history, literature, foreign languages, and other fields that provide individuals with critical ethical, cultural, and historical perspective. Additionally, NEH funding allocated through state humanities councils strengthens the cultural infrastructure of local communities in every state and territory across the nation.

Investment in the humanities advances vital U.S. 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 vital to U.S. interests. That’s 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 outstanding steward of the relatively small amount of federal support it receives annually. Between 1965 and 2014, NEH successfully leveraged more than $4.8 billion in non-federal support (adjusted for inflation). However, current demand for humanities project support far exceeds funding availability and non-federal support for the humanities has declined in recent years, in part due to the current economic downturn. Each year, as billions of dollars are rightfully invested in research and education in science and technology, the relative federal investment in the humanities falls further behind.
We are aware of the many difficult choices your Subcommittee faces in crafting its FY 2017 bill, but we believe that strong federal support for the humanities is needed now more than ever to preserve America’s place as a world leader in education and innovation for all fields of learning and help provide our nation’s citizenry and workforce with the foundation necessary to tackle the challenges of today’s globalized world. We appreciate your past support of NEH and strongly urge your support for this request.

Sincerely,

David E. Price  
Member of Congress

Leonard Lance  
Member of Congress

Robert A. Brady  
Member of Congress

James R. Langevin  
Member of Congress

Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress

Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress

Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress

Alma S. Adams  
Member of Congress

Frank Pallone  
Member of Congress

Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress

Alan Grayson  
Member of Congress

Joseph P. Kennedy  
Member of Congress
Chris Gibson
Member of Congress

Peter Welch
Member of Congress

John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress

Donna F. Edwards
Member of Congress

Ben Ray Luján
Member of Congress

Tulsi Gabbard
Member of Congress

Collin C. Peterson
Member of Congress

Albio Sires
Member of Congress

Mike Coffman
Member of Congress

C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
Member of Congress

Mike Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress

Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress
Tammy Duckworth
Member of Congress

Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress

Dan Kildee
Member of Congress

Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

Elizabeth Esty
Member of Congress

Ryan Costello
Member of Congress

Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

Scott Peters
Member of Congress

Jim Costa
Member of Congress

Raul Ruiz
Member of Congress

Seth Moulton
Member of Congress

Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress

Donald Norcross
Member of Congress
Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress

Suzan DelBene  
Member of Congress

Dina Titus  
Member of Congress

Mark Takai  
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress

Loretta Sanchez  
Member of Congress

William R. Keating  
Member of Congress

John Lewis  
Member of Congress

John A. Yarmuth  
Member of Congress

Eliot Vela  
Member of Congress

Lois Frankel  
Member of Congress

Sam Farr  
Member of Congress

Xavier Becerra  
Member of Congress
Sander M. Levin
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

Mark Takano
Member of Congress

Raul M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress

Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress

Jerry Nadler
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Matt Cartwright
Member of Congress

Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress

Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress

Mike Honda
Member of Congress

Katherine Clark
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress
Gregory Meeks  
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress

Shea Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress

Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress

Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress

Sean Patrick Maloney  
Member of Congress

Chris Van Hollen  
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress

Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress

Charles B. Rangel  
Member of Congress

Janice D. Schakowsky  
Member of Congress

Bill Pascrell Jr.  
Member of Congress
Adam Smith  
Member of Congress

Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress

Judy Chu  
Member of Congress

Marc Veasey  
Member of Congress

Emanuel Cleaver, II  
Member of Congress

Michelle Lujan Grisham  
Member of Congress

Elijah E. Cummings  
Member of Congress

Grace Meng  
Member of Congress

John Garamendi  
Member of Congress

Richard E. Neal  
Member of Congress

Lynn Jenkins, CPA  
Member of Congress

John B. Larson  
Member of Congress

Brad Ashford  
Member of Congress

Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Member of Congress
Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress

Bill Foster
Member of Congress

Lois Capps
Member of Congress

Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

Don Young
Member of Congress

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

Ron Kind
Member of Congress

Jim McDermott
Member of Congress

Gwen Graham
Member of Congress

Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress

Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress

Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette
Member of Congress
Timothy J. Walz
Member of Congress