March 20, 2012

The Honorable Michael K. Simpson
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment & Related Agencies
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Simpson:

We are writing to urge the Appropriations Committee to provide $154.3 million for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) in fiscal year (FY) 2013, as the President requested.

As you know, NEH is the primary source of federal support for humanities research 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. All sectors of our country’s education enterprise – research universities, small private institutions, state colleges, and community colleges – use NEH’s competitive grants to conserve and nurture America’s heritage and educate the next generation of Americans. Additionally, NEH funding allocated through state humanities councils strengthens the cultural infrastructure of local communities in every state and territory across the nation.

When we think of national security, the global economy, and other perennial and pressing concerns, the word “humanities” does not typically come to mind. But it should. 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 more interconnected, building a solid foundation in the humanities becomes even more vital to U.S. interests – that’s why virtually all of our CIA analysts, State Department officials and diplomats at embassies across the globe are graduates of the humanities.

NEH has been an outstanding steward of the relatively small amount of federal support it receives annually. Between 1965 and 2009, NEH successfully leveraged more than $2 billion in non-federal support, including private and institutional contributions. However, current demand for humanities project support far exceeds funding availability and non-federal support for the humanities has declined sharply 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. The President’s FY 2013 request therefore includes a 3.5 percent increase ($5 million) to NEH’s base budget, as well as a one-time appropriation of $3 million to support the costs of relocating the NEH from its current
offices in the Old Post Office Pavilion (as mandated by the Old Post Office Building
Redevelopment Act of 2008).

We are aware of the many difficult choices your Subcommittee faces in crafting its FY 2013 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 FY 2013 request.

Sincerely,

David Price
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

Dale E. Kildee
Member of Congress

Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress

Silvestre Reyes
Member of Congress

Lois Capps
Member of Congress

James P. Moran
Member of Congress

John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress

Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress

Henry A. Waxman
Member of Congress

Collin C. Peterson
Member of Congress

Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress
Theodore E. Deutch  
Member of Congress

Jim McDermott  
Member of Congress

Sam Farr  
Member of Congress

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

John Mica  
Member of Congress

Xavier Becerra  
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress

Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress

Brad Miller  
Member of Congress

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress

Rush Holt  
Member of Congress

Sander Levin  
Member of Congress

Hansen Clarke  
Member of Congress

Mazie K. Hirono  
Member of Congress
Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress

Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress

Rosa DeLauro
Member of Congress

Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress

Bob Filner
Member of Congress

Maurice D. Hinchey
Member of Congress

Mike Ross
Member of Congress

Madeleine Z. Bordallo
Member of Congress

Dennis J. Kucinich
Member of Congress

Dan Boren
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C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
Member of Congress

Steve Israel
Member of Congress

Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

Mark Critz
Member of Congress
Doris O. Matsui  
Member of Congress

Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress

Fortney "Pete" Stark  
Member of Congress

Shelley Berkley  
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress

John Yarmuth  
Member of Congress

Jared Polis  
Member of Congress

David Scott  
Member of Congress

Colleen Hanabusa  
Member of Congress

Ben Ray Lujan  
Member of Congress

Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan  
Member of Congress

André Carson  
Member of Congress

James McGovern  
Member of Congress

Cc: House Appropriations Committee Chairman Harold Rogers  
House Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Norm Dicks