1993

Community Arts Partnership Act (1994): Memorandum 01

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MEMORANDUM

To: David  
From: Margaret  
Re: H.R. 2933, Community Arts Partnership Act  
Date: January 28, 1993

You have asked me for information about H.R. 2933 in reference to Roger Mandle’s letter to Pell, and Pell’s request to "cope, support and let me know".

This is the bill that Fern has spoken to me about over the past few months and here is the scoop.....

H.R. 2933

The bill authorizes $50 million to provide funds to link community cultural resources with disadvantaged students. Competitive demonstration grants authorized under this proposal are intended to provide coordinated services for at-risk youth in and out of school. The feds will pay 80% of grant and it will supplement and not supplant local efforts. Eligible entities might include, but would not be limited to, museums, libraries, and recognized postsecondary institutions that specialize in the arts. Priority is placed on those programs that provide services that extend beyond traditional school or service hours.

H.R. 2933 and Admin’s proposal

The Admin’s proposal basically maintains the current programs with monies directly going to the Kennedy Center and Very Special Arts. S.1513 does expand current law by encouraging research, dissemination, curriculum frameworks, professional development and collaborative activities with institutions involved in arts education, such as the NEA and the National Gallery. However, this "expansion" is very loose language, and basically just adds these activities to the list of authorized activities. It doesn't go as far as setting up a structure for actually making grants for these partnerships.

Current law even allows for these partnerships to be made: ("the Secretary shall "carry out a program of grants and contracts to encourage and assist SEAs, LEAs and other public and private agencies to establish and conduct programs in which the arts are in an integral part of el and sec school curricula, including JFK Performing Arts and Very Special Arts.") In reality, however, the $8.9 million is made of two awards: one to JFK and one to Very Special Arts.

House action

Representative Engel has sponsored the bill which is backed by about 80 arts organizations and has 31 cosponsors. Kildee went to a town meeting last week and told the participants that this arts education bill would be the only new program he will support in ESEA. Jane Alexander is supposedly going to call Engel on Monday (January 31st) and offer the NEA's official support.

Senate action
Fern went first to Harkin to ask him to take the lead in sponsorship. Bev was excited about the bill but said in all honesty to Fern that she did not have time because she is handling welfare reform. So Fern has come to us. She has not contacted the Kennedy staff, although they now have wind of the bill and are upset that they were not contacted. If we want to take the lead on this, we could jump the gun on Kennedy. I am well aware of the Senator's support for arts education and therefore would be inclined to have Pell take it; on the other hand, it is a completely new categorical program, and I know we are already going to be supporting the inclusion of many smaller categoricals that the Administration has left out of their proposal. Therefore, I am uncertain as to how we should proceed, and if we should be out front on this.

Administration line

The Administration has taken a neutral position on this according to Fern. The idea of new categorical programs is as you know, not favorable with the Administration. On the other hand, it is also a program that is difficult to oppose outright.

Kennedy Center and VSA

The Kennedy Center and Very Special Arts—as well as the arts standards groups who think they will get some of the money with the "expansion" of the language—are worried that this program will take money from their pot. The program however, would be proposed as a separate program, a separate line item, and therefore would not directly be vying for funds under Part E: "Arts in Education", under which KC and VSA receive their funds.