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Arts and Humanities: Pell Amendments (1975): Correspondence 03

Richard McLanathan

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Report on Labor

Paul Jackson

Advice & Consent
Senate...

Report
United States Senate

MEMORANDUM

Awards, (3 years)

Art bank.

Proposals -

"certainly be valuable"

Museum & challenge
grants - N.H.

Report



March 31, 1976

Mr. Livingston Biddle
Staff Director
Sub Committee on the Arts
and Humanities, U.S. Senate
4228 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20570

Dear Mr. Biddle:

In answer to your questions during our recent telephone conversation, I am writing from the point of view of museums and the museum profession to outline what seem to me the major aspects of the prospective funding legislation.

Museums in all fields need federal financial aid with an increasing necessity because of the bind between rising costs and fast-growing demand for services. The need is so great, that where and how it comes is secondary.

However, the NEA system of review and advice by fellow professionals had worked so effectively for arts institutions, that the agency responsible for the administration of the new legislation might well model its approach on NEA's, as it should be equally successful for all museums.

Assistance has been available primarily for art museums with less opportunity for history, science and technology museums; federal aid, is therefore, very much needed in these other areas.

Museums need operating assistance, but if the emphasis is placed, not on operating funds, but rather on the support of on-going programs (as opposed to special projects), it will assist those institutions which are already making a contribution, i.e., aid those generally most worthy of it, rather than invite, as was the unfortunate result of the N.Y. State Council's offer of operating support a few years ago, the proliferation of demands which

Mr. Livingston Biddle

- 2 -

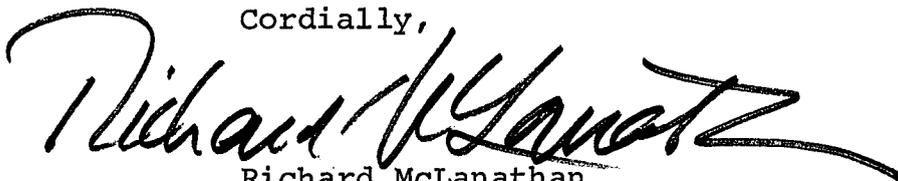
March 31, 1976

could, through their number, water down the grants until they do not properly serve the profession or the community. In other words, I feel emphasis properly should be placed on those institutions already established, already staffed, active, and striving, which, with aid, could do more and better.

Though I cannot speak for the profession as a whole, I am sure that the great majority, in all disciplines, would generally agree on these points.

With best wishes,

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard McLanathan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Richard McLanathan
Director

RMc :pg