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7-13-1973

National Museum Act Program (1973-1974): Correspondence 01

Milton D. Thompson

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**ILLINOIS
STATE
MUSEUM**

FOUNDED 1877
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706
PHONE: 217-525-7386
MILTON D. THOMPSON
MUSEUM DIRECTOR

July 13, 1973

Senator Claiborne Pell, Chairman,
Special Subcommittee on Arts and Humanities,
United States Senate, Room 4230,
Washington, D. C. 20510.

Dear Senator Pell:

The Association of Science Museum Directors is very aware of the important services being rendered by National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Smithsonian Institution, through their respective responsibilities to the Museums of America. We urgently hope that these programs may continue to grow in order that their impact may be more widespread in the future.

In urging support of the concepts you have incorporated in the Museum Services Act (S. 796) we are not depreciating the significance of existing programs but do feel these further extensions of support are seriously needed to preserve and present to the public the national treasures of artistic works, cultural artifacts and natural materials housed in the Museums of the country.

The one area completely missing in the foregoing programs is museum maintenance as it is to be found in renovation of museum structures, exhibits and collections, construction of facilities either as new facilities or remodeling of deserving earlier facilities, and basic operation of museums.

All of the significant museums represented by the Association of Science Museum Directors are seriously handicapped by the combined impact of the rising costs of living against the decreasing sources of income for these important capital and day to day operations. The statement of purpose in S. 796 expresses exactly the feelings of our personnel in regard to the great needs of these resources.

Our representatives in the American Association of Museums will discuss with you at the hearings comments and details regarding the Bill, and I am certain that as a result of these hearings some modifications will take place. We have discussed many of the details with them and feel they will represent us well.

In order to preserve the cultural heritage and wealth of the nation in art, artifacts and specimens housed in our Museums throughout the entire country, we feel that it is proper and right that the Federal government help in the preservation and protection of this national heritage of great significance, and urge that a Museum Services Act may emerge that will accomplish these purposes.

Sincerely yours,


Milton D. Thompson, Secretary,

Association of Science Museum Directors.

MDT:hmb