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The **NHA** National Humanities Alliance

16 July 1990

The Honorable Claiborne Pell
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

RE: S 2724

Dear Senator Pell:

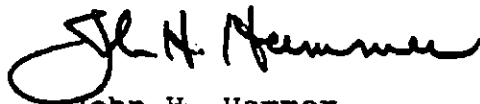
In connection with the reauthorization of the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, the National Humanities Alliance urges you to amend S 2724 to provide authorized funding levels for the National Endowment for the Humanities that account for the inflation of the last decade. Specifically, we urge that the authorized level for NEH in Fiscal Year 1991 be set at \$223 million with such sums as may be necessary for 1992-95. As witnesses for the Federation of State Humanities Councils testified in April, \$223 million is the adjusted level necessary to meet the cost of inflation since FY-1981 when the NEH appropriation was \$151.3 million. (The Administration's proposal of \$364 million total for NEA-NEH-IMS for FY-1991 -- as included in S 2724 -- is identical with the President's request for FY-91 appropriations for NEH, NEA, and IMS.)

As you know, the funding pattern for the Endowment remained flat through most of the last decade. (In FY-89, the NEH budget for the first time exceeded the FY-1981 level but, if inflation had been taken into account, the \$153 million would have been increased by more than \$60 million.) The National Endowment for the Arts and the Institute of Museum Services have similar patterns of flat funding over the last decade and would, without doubt, benefit from parallel adjustments.

We recognize that the chances of the FY-91 appropriation for NEH being increased to the proposed authorized level is virtually nil but we believe, nonetheless, that the adjustment would be a vital step toward breaking the pattern of declining appropriations in terms of real dollars and toward strengthening the resources available to the Endowment to support scholarship, teaching and other humanities activities in the U.S. At NEH, the effect of a decade of flat budgets has been an increase in the number of highly rated proposals that can not be funded and a decrease in the percentage of project costs that can be supported in grant awards.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. The Alliance would be pleased to provide additional information if requested.

Sincerely,



John H. Hammer
Director