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State Humanities Committees (1979-1982): Report 01

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HUMAN RESOURCES

To: Sandy
FROM: Sven

7/24

This was provided to us by an outside source. I know you are developing a compromise position, but thought you might like to have this statement of reasoning for your file.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20508



Division of State Programs

The State Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities is an effort to provide local support for humanities projects reaching a diverse and extensive public. It is the Endowment's largest investment of funds in a single program. The program began in six states in 1971 and grew to involve all fifty states by the fall of 1975. In each state, a private, volunteer citizens' committee makes applications to the Endowment. The committee uses the funds awarded it, in turn, to make grants to non-profit groups and organizations within the state. State humanities committees, therefore, are re-granting agencies.

Each committee determines its own program, produces its own brochures and application forms, and establishes its own procedures for the solicitation and review of proposals. In general, committees fund, on a competitive basis, up to one-half the cost of projects that will bring humanities programs to an out-of-school adult audience. From the inception of the program, the committees have, as a matter of policy, limited their funding to proposals which outlined projects to bring together the adult public and scholars in the humanities in the exploration of issues of broad public concern. In response to a number of factors, including the 1976 legislation re-authorizing the National Endowment for the Humanities, the committees will be re-examining their programs in the coming months and seeking additional means of serving the citizens of the state.

Each committee is made up of individuals broadly representative of the general public and individuals professionally involved with the disciplines of the humanities. In addition, the governor of each state may appoint two members to the committee. Each committee develops explicit procedures for the nomination of new members, for member and officer rotation, and for public accessibility to its decisions and procedures.

The state programs have their foundation in the Congressional mandate expressed in the Endowment's charter legislation: the Endowment is charged to "increase public understanding and appreciation of the humanities." Each committee makes independent decisions about which of the proposals that come before it to fund, about the employment of staff and location of offices, and about how its program can best be promoted and evaluated.

Each committee applies to the Endowment for funds to support its program, and each seeks support from other public and private sources as well. The proposal submitted by each committee to the Endowment serves both as a review of the committee's activities during the past grant period and an exposition of committee plans for the future.

September, 1977