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The **NHA** National Humanities Alliance

3 February 1989

MEMORANDUM

TO: NHA Members (and Friends)
FR: John Hammer

RE: Washington News = 1. FY-90 Proposal Includes Increase for NEH
2. House Agency Hearing for NEH Held 1/25/88
3. Recess Appointments to the NEH Council
4. In Brief...
o Mr. Yates Joins Legislative Budget Unit
o Secretary of Arts and Humanities?
o President's Committee on the Arts and
the Humanities

1. **Last Reagan Budget Proposals Include an Increase for NEH** - The budget proposal for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) submitted to Congress on 9 January 1989 in the last days of the Reagan Administration, broke new ground. For the first time in eight years, an increase over previous Congressional appropriation has been requested for NEH. While an increase from \$153.0 to 153.25 million in a federal agency's budget is modest to say the least, it nonetheless continues the favorable trend begun last year when the Administration offered a proposal equal to the preceding year's level -- also a major shift following six years of requests to reduce NEH funding levels. As this report is prepared at the end of January, there have been reports of directives for fine tuning in the budget proposals for cabinet agencies but the new Administration has seemingly given no hint as to any possible changes in the NEH budget request -- not surprising for such a tiny entity in the federal enterprise.

Of particular note in the proposed budget (a summary of which appears in chart form below) are:

o **Research Programs** at \$17 million, an increase of \$600,000 that was mentioned in NEH's budget news release as allowing NEH "to continue its support of the important work that scholars do to recover and interpret the past -- research that provides the foundation of both public programming and teaching;"

o A **Preservation** budget of \$13.5 million, an increase of \$1.17 million which would fully fund the second year of the NEH's preservation initiative. The initiative is centered on an ambitious plan to film 3 million significant volumes threatened by deterioration due to the acidic paper used to print them;

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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES BUDGET SUMMARY
(in thousands)

	FY-1988 Enacted	FY-1989 President Enacted	FY-1990 President	FYs 89 & 90 Changes	
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS	\$16,350	\$16,150	\$15,150	\$16,200	+\$50
FELLOWSHIPS & SEMINARS	15,560	15,300	15,560	15,400	-160
GENERAL PROGRAMS	22,580	22,340	22,840	23,160	+340
o Media	(8,900)	(9,400)	(9,400)	(9,180)	(-220)
o Museums & Historic Orgs	(8,780)	(8,340)	(8,640)	(8,900)	(-260)
o Public	(2,000)	(2,500)	(2,000)	(2,300)	(-300)
o Libraries & Archives	(2,900)	(2,100)	(2,800)	(2,800)	(=)
RESEARCH PROGRAMS	16,400	16,400	16,400	17,000	-600
STATE PROGRAMS	21,300	21,200	25,000	25,000	=
PRESERVATION	4,500	4,495	12,330*	13,500	+1,170
<u>Total Definite Funds</u>	<u>96,690</u>	<u>95,885</u>	<u>108,450</u>	<u>110,280</u>	<u>-1,830</u>
CHALLENGE	16,500	16,700	16,700	14,700	-2,000
TREASURY	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	=
<u>Total Indefinite Funds</u>	<u>28,500</u>	<u>28,700</u>	<u>28,700</u>	<u>26,700</u>	<u>-2,000</u>
ADMINISTRATIVE	15,245	15,850	16,020	16,270	-250
<u>Total NEH Funds</u>	<u>\$140,435</u>	<u>\$140,435</u>	<u>\$153,000</u>	<u>\$153,250</u>	<u>-250</u>

* The NEH's 4/19/88 capability statement for preservation filming of brittle books which called for a special increase in the first year (i.e., FY-89) of \$8 million for the Office of Preservation, plus \$170,000 extra for administration. Congress enacted the plan as proposed except that the administrative money was deducted from the \$8 million. The FY-90 budget proposal adds the \$1 million increase in program funds called for in the capability statement plus the \$170,000

OTHER SELECTED ARTS & HUMANITIES BUDGETS INCLUDED IN THE INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS

	FY-1988 Enacted	FY-1989 President Enacted	FY-1990 President	FYs 89 & 90 Changes	
National Endowment for the Arts	\$167,731	\$167,731	\$169,090	\$170,100	+\$1,000
Institute of Museum Services	21,944	21,994	22,270	22,350	+80
Smithsonian Institution	230,151	252,504	245,935	270,890	+24,955
Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars	4,028	4,285	4,540	4,700**	+160
National Capitol Arts & Cultural Affairs Program	4,500	-0-	5,000	-0-	-5,000

** Includes \$300,000 additional over the \$4,240,000 regular FY-89 appropriation available until 9/30/90 to the extent Wilson Center can match on a three-to-one basis with private funds.

o **General Programs** raised to \$23.18 million (up by \$340,000) with the increases going to Museums and Historic Organizations (up by \$260,000 to \$8.9 million) and Public projects (up by \$300,000 to \$2.3 million) but with Media projects reduced to \$9.18 million (down by \$220,000). The Libraries and Archives program is proposed unchanged at \$2.8 million.

o **State Programs** would be continued at the \$25 million level appropriated in the current fiscal year. While the proposal is for no growth, it would freeze the State Program at the substantially increased level gained in the previous year when the State budget jumped nearly 18% from \$21.3 to \$25 million;

o **Challenge Grants** drop significantly from \$16.7 million to \$14.7 million. Ironically, the Endowment found the elbowroom to make its budget increases in other programs through the reduction of the Challenge Grant program by \$2 million -- the amount 'saved' through the discontinuation of the special support grants to the New York Public Library. Office of Challenge Grants Director Harold Cannon points out that since his program actually draws payments for most grantees out annual appropriations over three years, a flexibility unique to the Challenge program within NEH, budgetary shortfalls may be compensated for through future appropriations.

o The **Administrative** budget increase of \$250,000 to \$16.27 million would provide NEH employees with the salary increases of 4.1% -- the increase set for federal employee this year; cover changes in benefits; and happily for panelists, increase living expenses in Washington, DC to regular Federal per diem rate (currently, \$121.00 per day).

2. **Agency Hearing for NEH Held 25 January 1988** - The Interior and Related Agencies Subcommittee on the House Appropriations Committee scheduled the hearings for agency witnesses on the FY-1990 budget proposals unusually early this year. On January 25, NEH Chairman Lynne V. Cheney, accompanied by the agency's administrative and program executives, participated in more than six hours of hearings before the Subcommittee.

The hearing followed established format with the majority of the morning session devoted to an opening statement and questioning of Mrs. Cheney, followed by individual presentations and questions for each of the program directors. In addition to the regulars for such a hearing, Chairman Rep. Sidney R. Yates (D-IL) and the ranking minority member Rep. Ralph Regula (R-OH); Rep. Bill Lowery (R-CA) and Rep. Chester D. Atkins (D-MA) were active participants for much of the hearing. (Rep. Atkins is new to the Subcommittee with this session of Congress. He fills the seat vacated by the retirement of 18-term Congressman Edward P. Boland, also of Massachusetts.)

While offering praise for a number of the Endowment's recent accomplishments, there was also an edge to many of Mr. Yates'

questions. This was particularly apparent in his questions concerning Humanities in America (the Endowment's first congressionally mandated biennial report on the state of the humanities in the U.S.) and the National Center for History (NEH's three-year cooperative agreement with the University of California at Los Angeles established in March of 1988 following a competition in which eleven groups submitted proposals).

o Humanities in America - Early in the hearing, Mr. Yates announced that he found Humanities in America (HiA) "interesting reading." Later, referring to the "practical system of national information and data collection" that was to be developed as a basis for the biennial reports, Mr. Yates suggested that the first report may not be responsive to the Congressional mandate. He read aloud the section of the 1985 legislation [U.S. Code 20/956 (Sec 7)(k)]. Mrs. Cheney responded by reading from the list of sources utilized in preparing HiA. Mr. Yates did not pursue the question further.

In response to Mr. Yates' question on the value of specialized research, Mrs. Cheney responded that NEH does value much of the specialized research but that the agency also seeks to actively encourage scholars interested in pursuing broader topics.

In her responses to questions from MR. Yates and Mr. Lowery on enrollment trends in the humanities, Mrs. Cheney cautioned that the issue is complex and then outlined the major elements of her HiA assessment of the situation including the belief that enrollments have stabilized. Mrs. Cheney noted that the authors of Speaking for the Humanities (the report published by the American Council of Learned Societies that was also printed in its entirety in the 1/11/89 Chronicle of Higher Education) contend that humanities enrollments tend to increase in prosperous times and vica versa. With a smile, she said that by that measure, humanities enrollments in the U.S. must be improving given the prosperity of the Reagan/Bush years.

o National Center for History - The History Center was mentioned frequently during the course of the day, including questions about the selection process followed before the large contract was awarded to UCLA. Mrs. Cheney characterized the central goal of the UCLA Center as "trying to figure out what is actually going on" in the teaching of history in the schools. Referential to the Center, Mr. Atkins asked several questions concerning NEH support for development of good school history texts. In response to questions of possible public concern, even constitutional problems, with federal intrusion into textbook matters, Mr. Atkins pointed to the National Science Foundation's involvement in the financing of numerous texts for teaching science in the schools. Mr. Atkins also indicated that concern about federal involvement in text development (the UCLA Center is not developing texts) should also extend to a concern about federal involvement in curriculum development (the UCLA Center will be developing curricula).

o **Follow-up on American Memory** (the Congressionally mandated report on the on humanities in public schools prepared by NEH in 1987) was raised at a number of points in the hearing, notably in connection with the History Center. The Subcommittee appeared well satisfied with the report and interested in how the NEH itself was addressing the recommendations that accompanied it.

o **Preservation** - The portion of the hearing devoted to preservation -- especially the major initiative on preservation filming begun last year -- was rather brief. George Farr, (Senior Program Officer for NEH's Office of Preservation) reported that the initiative was on schedule and off to a good start. Projects begun in FY-1989 will increase the number of titles reformed from brittle books (i.e., the information preserved on microfilm) to an annual rate of 45,000. The \$1.17 million increase requested in FY-90 would further increase the annual rate of preserved brittle books to 75,000.

The reason that preservation, an NEH-related issue of very high priority for Mr. Yates, could be disposed of so handily in the hearing is that Mr. Yates and his key staff aide on the Subcommittee, Niel Sigmon had convened a briefing on the NEH preservation initiative ten days earlier. Participants in the briefing included George Farr accompanied by Jason Hall and Steve Cherrington (NEH's Congressional liaison and director of planning and budget respectively); Librarian of Congress James Billington accompanied by Adoreen McCormick and Carolyn Morrow (LC's Legislative Liaison Officer and Assistant National Preservation Officer, respectively); Patricia Battin, President of the Commission on Preservation and Access; and Warren Haas, President of the Council on Library Resources. Reports on the briefing (and Mr. Yates' remarks at the 1/25/89 hearing) indicate that the preservation filming initiative at NEH is progressing well and that funds appropriated and requested are adequate for the goals of that initiative. Apparently, Mr. Billington was invited both to review coordination between LC preservation activities and the NEH initiative, and also to discuss more generally LC's preservation activities. (See note below on Mr. Yates' broadened involvement in the LC.)

o **Parity and Appropriation Levels at NEH** - The annual questions about whether NEH could use more money took an interesting turn this year. With prompting, Mrs. Cheney reiterated her view that the lack of parity in budgets between NEH and NEA is a problem. She went on to say that she did not think that a time of a very serious deficit was an appropriate one for seeking resolution on the parity issue. Mr. Regula said that the Subcommittee could make any increases this year the same for both Endowments. Mr. Yates retorted that Mrs. Cheney did not want the money. To which Mr. Regula said "We'll just have to force it on her." (If the Subcommittee followed this approach, NEH could receive about \$750,000 more than requested.)

3. **Recess Appointments to the NEH Council** - Last December, following a time honored practice, the Reagan Administration made recess appointments for a number of nominations left hanging when the 100th Congress adjourned in October. Included among these appointments were the two pending nominations for the National Council on the Humanities: Gary McDowell and Jeanne Smoot. Dr. McDowell, an historian on the staff of the National Legal Center for the Public Interest (Washington, DC), is a former NEH employee. Dr. Smoot, Professor of English at North Carolina State University (Raleigh), formerly directed the Office of Academic Programs at the United States Information Agency.

Both appointments are to terms ending 1/26/94 but will lapse at the end of the first session of the current Congress unless confirmed by the Senate. In the event that the Senate fails to act by December 1989, it is quite possible that one or both could serve until 1994 because Council members continue to serve until a successor has been confirmed.

4. In Brief...

o **Mr. Yates Joins Legislative Appropriations Subcommittee** - In January, there were a number of changes in membership on the appropriations subcommittees. Of particular interest members was Mr. Yates' decision to relinquish a seat on the Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Subcommittee in order to assume a position on the Legislative Branch Subcommittee. (Mr. Yates continues as Chairman of the Interior and Related Agencies Subcommittee.) From his new position in which he will be the second ranking member after the Chairman, Vic Fazio (D-CA), Mr. Yates can play a more central role in development of the Library of Congress (e.g., preservation, the new National Film Board) and the Government Printing Office (e.g., use of alkaline paper).

o **Secretary of Arts and Humanities?** - On January 4, Rep. Mary Rose Oaker (D-OH) introduced a bill to establish a Department of Arts and Humanities [H.R. 219]. The proposed legislation has been referred to the Committee on Government Operations but not yet assigned to a subcommittee. In addition to seeking a hearing for the legislation, Ms. Oaker is reportedly interested in raising the issue during anticipated hearings on the reauthorization of the National Foundation for the Arts and the Humanities.

o **Life for the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities after 9/30/89?** - Established in 1982 by Executive Order with the primary mission of identifying and promoting private sector support for arts and humanities, the Committee is credited with attracting support for a number of projects. While currently scheduled to terminate in September 1989, \$280,000 dollars has been requested for the Committee in FY-90 apportioned equally between NEH and NEA. Reversing earlier criticisms of the value of the Committee, Mr. Yates spoke in favor of the budget request at the agency hearing on NEA's FY-90 budget held last month.