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National Endowment for the Humanities: Council Reappointments (1984): Correspondence 05

Edward M. Kennedy

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND
HUMAN RESOURCES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

RONALD F. DOCKSAI, STAFF DIRECTOR
KATHRYN O'L. HIGGINS, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

July 30, 1984

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
Chairman
Committee on Labor and Human Resources
428 Dirksen Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I was deeply disappointed by the untimely appointment of the individuals to the National Council of the Humanities Endowment when the Senate recently and briefly recessed. I believe that this precipitous action is a regrettable circumvention of the advise and consent responsibilities of the Senate.

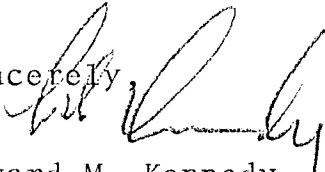
This group of nominees to the Humanities panel has generated considerable controversy. Criticism that the Humanities Endowment is, for the first time, being politicized to the exclusion of individuals with academic experience in the core humanities areas cannot be ignored.

I am particularly distressed by the appointment of Mrs. Helen Marie Taylor to this position of public trust. As you know, the Administration earlier submitted her name to the Senate for appointment to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. At that time, Senator Barry Goldwater blocked this nomination citing his concerns with information in her FBI file.

Although an informal request has been made to your office previously, I would like to request at this time that the Minority have access to the FBI file which caused Mrs. Taylor's nomination to fail in the Commerce Committee.

I am sure that you also agree that a demonstrated disregard for Senate proceedings is disheartening any time that it occurs. I hope that the use of recess appointments will in the future be reserved for those circumstances for which the Constitution prudently provided.

Sincerely,


Edward M. Kennedy
Ranking Minority Member