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Revised

Statement for CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON TRAAVELING ART EXHIBIT

Mr. President. Last spring, working closely with Mr. John Walker, Director of the National Gallery of Art, I undertook an art experiment in Rhode Island. It has just reached what I consider to be a most successful conclusion. Therefore, I strongly recommend that a similar program be started on a nationwide basis.

Mr. Walker and Mr. Grose Evans, curator of the Index of American Design, prepared for me a collection of 16 collotype reporductions of great Renaissance paintings. (See extension of remarks for list.) These were shipped to Rhode Island where I arranged to have them exhibited in 19 city and town halls throughout the state for a period of 2 weeks each. (Schedule appears in extension of remarks.) They were deliberately scheduled in the city and town halls, because my purpose was not so much to attract art lovers to yet another exhibition, as it was to bring great art to the attention of thousands who might not otherwise make the effort to see it. I am happy to say that both of these purposes seem to have been accomplished.

On June 7, 1962 the traveling exhibition had its first opening in the City Hall in Providence. I had fully intended to participate personally in these opening

ceremonies, but an important vote in this chamber on that day kept me in Washington. Therefore, my wife and Mayor Walter Reynolds of Providence did the honors. There was broad press and television coverage which led to a large degree of popular interest. Since that day, the exhibit has traveled to 18 other cities and towns and I am proud to say has met with enthusiastic approval in virtually every community. I received numerous telephone calls and letters praising the exhibit, both from public officials and from interested citizens. Many expressed the desire to purchase similar reproductions. Although it is of course difficult to pinpoint the exact number of people who viewed the exhibition, our unofficial estimate is upwards of 15,000. To my mind, these facts serve as adequate testimony that the cause of art appreciation has been enriched. It is for this reason that I should like to see a similar program inaugurated throughout the country.

There were naturally minor difficulties attendant upon a new program of this type. These have been called to the attention of the National Gallery and I have been assured that they can be easily straightened out. The only problem that I would foresee in a national scheduling would be one of logistics. I had the paintings driven

throughout the State in a station wagon. I can understand that the distinguished Senators from California or Illinois might have difficulty with this mode of transportation. But I am certain that some other financially reasonable method of transportation can be arranged in these larger states.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Mr. Walker and Mr. Evans whose wholehearted cooperation was vital to the success of "Operation Traveling Art." I think that together we have rendered benefit to many citizens in Rhode Island. I believe it would be to the cultural and aesthetic interest of the United States to render this benefit to all our citizens.