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David B. H. Martin

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

SECRETARY'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON
AUTOMATED PERSONAL DATA SYSTEMS

December 18, 1973

Mr. David D. Ryus
Vice President
The American Museum of Natural
History
Central Park West at 79th St.
New York, New York 10024

Dear Dave:

Here is a copy of the hearings on the Museum Services
Legislation.

The Administration has expressed a "no objection" policy
to S. 2137. It opposes S. 796. HEW's letter to the Com-
mittee objects on several grounds including cost, admin-
istrative complexity, and the asserted inappropriateness
of getting the Federal government more heavily involved
in support of museums than it already is (on the theory
that adequate support for museums should be provided by
State and local government and from private sources).

I talked with Livingston Biddle of Senator Pell's staff
(tel. (202) 225-4642) who is seized with the legislation
for the Senator. He explained that there is some dis-
unity within the museum community about what sort of
Federal support to seek. Some would welcome partial
support for the cost of special educational programs,
acquisitions, capital improvements, etc.; others feel
basic institutional support to help meet operating
deficits is what is needed. The National Endowments for
the Arts and Humanities (and the Administration generally)
are opposed to having the Federal government take on the
latter, in part because it would probably lead to pres-
sures for similar support from orchestras, dance compa-
nies, theatrical groups, etc.

The Smithsonian does not want to become the manager of a
large scale program of Federal support for museums lest
this dimension of activity come to overshadow its primary
functions as a museum (exhibition, research and education).

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Senator Pell, who counts Senator Javits as a strong ally in his efforts, has not given up. I expect that if the opportunity develops in the second session of the current Congress (in 1974) to achieve something beneficial for museums (at least, say, the enactment of S. 2137), Senator Pell will be in the thick of it.

I took the liberty of suggesting to Mr. Biddle that he look to you as an effective helper in lining up support from "people who count", especially in New York.

I look forward to seeing you over Christmas.

With warmest regards.

Always,



David B. H. Martin
Special Assistant to
the Secretary

cc: Livingston Biddle