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STATEMENT OF SENATOR CLAIBORNE PELL

Madame Chairman, I vigorously oppose this amendment. The reality is that no government agency is going to be able to raise billions of dollars in private funds for grant activities. The private sector -- foundations, corporations and private patrons -- is already contributing the vast majority of cultural funding in our society. The Endowment funds provide the vital lever to encourage this involvement, but the private and philanthropic sectors are not going to contribute to the federal government so that the government can turn around and re-grant the money. I do not think that anyone would consider such an arrangement an efficient use of resources. Madame Chairman, the issue here is whether our society deems our culture important enough to spend a small portion of one percent of our budget to leverage private support. This amendment would set aside millions of dollars in federal monies for fund raising. I believe those funds could be more effectively spent elsewhere. Dr. Charles Clotfelter, a professor of economics and tax theory, testified at the reauthorization hearings on this privatization concept. He made it clear that an Endowment of several billion dollars would be required to sustain the grant functions now fulfilled by the Foundation on the Arts and Humanities.

Madame Chairman, our debate on the future of the National Endowments reminds me of a story I know concerning Winston Churchill. In the darkest days of the Second World War, when the outcome of the conflict was still unknown, a young staffer on the Prime Minister's staff found to his shock that the government had been fully funding the British Arts Council throughout the war. He went running to Mr. Churchill and informed him that he had found more funds for the war effort, and

how extraordinary it was that scarce resources were going for such a purpose when the Empire was in the midst of a life and death struggle. I am told that Winston Churchill turned to the young man and replied: "I would remind you, this is exactly what we are fighting for."

Madame Chairman, this amendment renounces even a small role for the federal government in supporting American culture. The Arts Endowment is a declaration of faith in our national future, an assertion of pride in the uniqueness of American creativity. The tiny federal support for the arts and scholarship makes a statement to our citizens, our corporations, and all other nations that the development of American culture is of value to our people. The American people are wondrously inventive, original and ingenious and consequentially our culture and scholarship is remarkably vibrant and dynamic. The evidence supports the fact that Americans from every walk of life, from every economic level, strongly desire and seek access to cultural events in their communities for themselves and for their children. Yet as concluded by many scholars and economists, in every society the arts have historically required a strong coalition of government, corporations and private patrons for their continued vigor. The NEA provides that all important leverage for support of cultural achievements.

We should not pass this amendment.