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August 2016

Legislative History of the Reauthorization of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) (1990): Speech 01

Claiborne Pell

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Pell, Claiborne, "Legislative History of the Reauthorization of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) (1990): Speech 01" (2016). *Legislative History of the Reauthorization of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) (1990)*. Paper 22.

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Statement by Senator Claiborne Pell on Introduction of the "Arts, Humanities and Museum Amendments of 1993"

MR. PELL. Mr. President, as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities, I am introducing legislation today that will provide for an extension of the authorization statute which governs the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Institute of Museum Services.

This proposal provides for a simple extension of existing law for these agencies for a two year period through fiscal year 1995. The funding levels authorized in this legislation are consistent with the President's proposed budget for fiscal year 1994 and such sums as may be necessary for fiscal year 1995.

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These three agencies were last reauthorized by the Arts, Humanities and Museums Amendments of 1990 which was enacted on November 5, 1990 for a three year period. Since this authority expires on September 30, it is important that we complete action on this simple extension in an expeditious manner.

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This plan of action should in no way imply that changes in the legislation are not needed. To the contrary, many important issues concerning these agencies await to be debated. This discussion, however, will occur over the next ~~two~~ ^{year} as we lead up to the next reauthorization in 1995. I will welcome the input from all interested parties during this period.

This schedule is necessary because I believe the Clinton Administration should have as full a role as possible in the debate over the future course of these agencies. Since we do not yet have fully confirmed Chairmen for the Endowments nor a new Director for the Institute of Museum Services, it is prudent to delay any consideration of substance. These individuals and their staffs will be crucial partners in the eventual full-scale review of these programs.

I look forward to this process which, hopefully, will reaffirm our government's commitment to the support of our nation's culture and set that commitment on a renewed and positive course. In the meantime I ask my colleagues to join in supporting this simple two year extension of the existing authority for these agencies.