

University of Rhode Island

DigitalCommons@URI

Senate Speeches on the Arts and Humanities
(1994-1996)

Education: National Endowment for the Arts
and Humanities, Subject Files I (1973-1996)

November 2016

Senate Speeches on the Arts and Humanities (1994-1996): Speech 09

Claiborne Pell

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/pell_neh_I_82

Recommended Citation

Pell, Claiborne, "Senate Speeches on the Arts and Humanities (1994-1996): Speech 09" (2016). *Senate Speeches on the Arts and Humanities (1994-1996)*. Paper 14.
https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/pell_neh_I_82/14

This Speech is brought to you for free and open access by the Education: National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities, Subject Files I (1973-1996) at DigitalCommons@URI. It has been accepted for inclusion in Senate Speeches on the Arts and Humanities (1994-1996) by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@etal.uri.edu.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR CLAIBORNE PELL

Mr. President, I propose a very modest amendment which would increase slightly the appropriations for the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Institute of Museum Services by a total of five million dollars -- one million to the Institute of Museum Services, two million to the National Endowment for the Humanities, and two million to the National Endowment for the Arts. These funds would be drawn from an across the board cut of 1% of administrative funds only for agencies within the Interior Appropriations bill.

Although this is a relatively small change in the administrative budget of these agencies, these funds would make a significant difference to thousands of scholarly, cultural and museum projects around the country. The bedrock of our nation's intellectual advancement lies in our scholars. It is their work, individually and as part of our great institutions, that makes our nation the leader it has become in erudition. Mr. President, my amendment would restore funds to preserve presidential papers, brittle books and historical documents, train elementary and secondary teachers through summer seminars to better educate our young people and make available travelling exhibits like "The Treasures of Sipan" or the Tuttenkhamen display so that the people all over the country shall have access to their cultural heritage. Thus, the NEH supports exemplary work to advance and disseminate knowledge in all the humanities disciplines. The NEH makes possible scholarly research, education and public programs concerned with history, literature, philosophy, language and other humanistic disciplines. The NEH has supported popular and scholarly works, including the Pulitzer Prize winning Slavery and Human Progress and programs such as The Civil War, Columbus and the Age of Discovery and Baseball by Mr. Ken Burns. Grants from the NEH have worldwide significance in the scholarly world.

The Institute of Museum Services is a shining example of the "Little Agency That Could." IMS grants go solely to general operating support to our nation's museums, strengthening them in the area for which it is most difficult to raise private funds. The IMS supports the most basic needs of these great institutions, their most basic expenses and conservation activities for art, history and science museums, among others. The Seattle Aquarium, the Desert Botanical Garden, the Akron Art Museum, The Children's Museum of Houston and many other have received essential IMS support. 87% of IMS grantees use

these federal funds to strengthen their educational activities. This support makes possible educational and cultural exhibits around the country, instructing and bringing joy to millions of Americans, young and old. This tiny agency has been a dynamic and imaginative leader in museum technology and education. Our museums are the keystone of our American identity, reminding us of who we have been and who we are today. Museums preserve our most valuable national possessions, protecting them from the ravages of time. Our nation receives back in value the cost of the IMS many times over.

The Arts Endowment, in turn, provides support to non-profit organizations and individuals in dance, design and folk arts, literature, opera and other artistic endeavors. Due to matching funds from state councils, community organizations and private donors, arts organizations now have the resources to present programs of extraordinary caliber and variety. Before the Arts Endowment came into existence, there were 37 professional dance companies in this country, today there are nearly 300. There were 58 orchestras, today there are more than a thousand. There were 22 professional theaters, today there are 420. The funds for the National Endowment for the Arts would still leave a 30% cut to that agency and make our national contribution to the arts less than 45 cents per person.

I also take note that over the last year Chairman Jane Alexander has instituted a series of most valuable changes in the agency's procedures. The agency will no longer accept applications from organizations, other than the state arts councils, which subgrant Endowment funds out to other projects. In addition, the Endowment will now require that progress reports be submitted before the release of the final third of a grant award. Permission from the agency will be necessary before a grantee can modify its activities from those approved by the Endowment. These changes give the Chairman greater oversight over Endowment grants and I believe they will go a long way towards addressing the concerns of many of our citizens.

I ask my colleagues to support this amendment.