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State Humanities Committees (1979-1982): Correspondence 05

John S. Murray

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The Senate

STATE OF IOWA

Sixty-Eighth General Assembly

STATEHOUSE

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

COMMITTEES

Appropriations, Chairman
Judiciary
State Government

JOHN S. MURRAY
STATE SENATOR
Twenty-First District
Boone, Polk and Story
Counties

HOME ADDRESS
2526 Chamberlain Avenue
AMES, IOWA 50010

SF 10 1979

September 5, 1979

The Honorable Claiborne Pell
U.S. Senator - Rhode Island
325 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Pell:

It has come to my attention that you are proposing, through your Subcommittee on Education, Arts and the Humanities, legislation to require the present independent state boards on Humanities to become agencies of the state.

As Chairman of the Iowa Senate Appropriations Committee and Assistant Majority Leader, I am in a position to evaluate what response Iowa legislators might take to the demand that we establish a new state agency for the humanities.

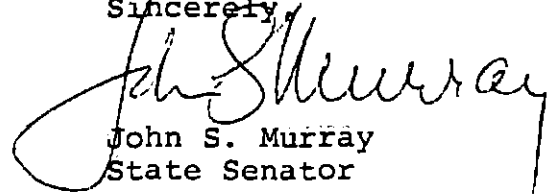
Iowa has been fortunate in having an independent Iowa Board for Public Programming in the Humanities, which has promoted valuable research and writing efforts at the same time as it has stimulated greater public awareness and participation through conferences and forums. The issues that it has selected have been vital to the quality of our society. In other words, we are pleased with the operation of the Iowa Board and see little reason for change.

In addition, Iowa legislators are generally wary of starting new state agencies, especially those that might require new state money. Making the Iowa Humanities Board a state agency would probably only increase the overhead administrative costs of grant application and award without any positive improvement in program. In my experience the addition of state government bureaucracy merely increases the expense without making the program more effective in responding to citizen input. This would be the probable result in the humanities field.

Honorable Claiborne Pell
September 5, 1979
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I urge you to reconsider your position on forcing new state agencies for support of the humanities.

Sincerely,



John S. Murray
State Senator

JSM/dmh