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Claiborne Pell

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July 31, 1981

Mr. John B. Bunkley
Emerson Road
Jamestown, Rhode Island 02835

Dear Mr. Bunkley:

Thank you very much for your recent letter in regard to the reduction in funding for the National Endowment for the Arts.

As you know, the President originally proposed a 500 percent cut in the fiscal year 1982 budget for the Arts Endowment. I strongly opposed that proposal - believing it to be unduly severe and too far out of line with other spending reductions.

I am pleased and relieved to report that the recently passed Omnibus Reconciliation Act authorizes the Endowment at a figure of $199.3 million which translates to a reduction of 32%.

I would have preferred a funding level that would enable the Endowment to maintain the level of current operations. Yet, while this was not the final decision, I am encouraged that we have managed to avoid a more drastic cutback.

Thank you again for writing me. I appreciate knowing your views and can assure you that I will continue to do all within my power to see that this vital program remains strong.

With warm regards,

Ever sincerely,

Claiborne Pell

AC/jb