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Hugh Southern

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NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR
THE ARTS

WASHINGTON
D.C. 20506



A Federal agency advised by the
National Council on the Arts

August 1, 1989

Honorable Claiborne Pell
Chairman,
Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities
648 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Pell:

I am writing in reference to your July 13, 1989 letter regarding the operation of the National Council on the Arts ("the Council") in reviewing applications to the Endowment. We very much appreciate your having taken the time to share your concerns.

As you know, the process of reviewing grant applications is a complex and time consuming one. The Endowment receives approximately 18,000 grant applications per year, which undergo review by an appropriate panel, the Council, and the Chairman. The Endowment is constantly reviewing the process to insure that it is as fair and responsible as possible.

In response to recent Congressional concerns regarding our grantmaking process, we are reviewing all levels of this review process to insure that it is of the highest quality and integrity. Accordingly, we have scheduled a lengthy session with the Council at its meeting later this week to review and discuss the Council's role in application review. We will provide you with a full report on the Council's discussion.

We appreciate your steadfast support of the Endowment and its peer panel review process. We look forward to working with you to strengthen the quality and integrity of this process. Please call me at any time if you have questions or wish to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Hugh Southern
Acting Chairman