

4-19-1996

## Appropriations (1996): Memorandum 10

D. F. R.

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### Recommended Citation

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## MEMORANDUM

April 19, 1996

To: Senator, Tom  
From: PDW  
Re: Update on the Reauthorization of the Endowments

As you know, the reauthorization of the National Foundation for the Arts and Humanities remains in limbo. S.856, which reported out of Committee last summer with large bipartisan support, is unlikely to reach the floor this year. Senator Dole has stated his opposition to the two endowments and Senator Kassebaum and other moderate Republicans do not want to put him on the spot. The portion of S.856 which creates an Institute for Museum and Library Services is in S. 143 (the companion to H.R. 1617), and this bill is now in conference, proceeding very slowly because of major disagreements that have nothing to do with museums and libraries. The Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Act will be a members' issue, if and when we get that far. I will brief you on this after we complete the staff work in conference.

The likely scenario is for Appropriations to include funding for the agencies at this year's low level (\$99 million each for NEA and NEH; \$22 million for IMS) in the FY'97 budget -- the same strategy as is anticipated for FY'96. Senator Hatfield has expressed his displeasure with lengthy reauthorization bills attached to appropriations so my counterpart in Senator Jefford's office and I are asking Legislative Counsel to prepare a simplified amendment seeking a one-year extension of the reauthorization (through FY'97) at "such sums", just in case we need it. Appropriations is holding a hearing on the NEA on Wednesday, May 8. I plan to attend and hope to have a more accurate reading as a result.

The two meetings I co-chaired with a staffer from Senator Stevens' office may have had some payoff. We seem to have a strong commitment from Senators Bennett, Hatfield and Stevens regarding some form of federal support for the arts and humanities. Arts staffers from these three offices will be meeting with Senator Gorton's staffer next week. As a result, we hope to have prepared the way for a positive outcome when Interior Appropriations meets on the endowments and IMS.

From what I hear from many different sources, the House has mellowed this year regarding members' demands for the elimination of the NEA and NEH. A small but solid core of moderates from both parties are building support for the beleaguered agencies. The issue is not expected to go to the floor. Meanwhile, on our side, we are encouraging House members to take a serious look at the Hutchison/Bennett amendment (which calls for one single agency, but a continued federal role) as an alternative to what is now their sole amendment (elimination), should we ever get to conference. Obviously, it cannot be thought that you and/or Senator Kennedy are behind this, or it will be rejected.