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Reagan Administration: Funding Cuts News Articles (1981-1982): Letter to the Editor 03

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By Carla Hall

The National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities have requested increases in their budgets for fiscal year 1982 which begins Oct. 1.

The NEA has requested \$175 million—a 10 percent increase in funding over the current appropriation of \$158.6 million.

The NEH has requested \$169 million—a 12 percent increase over the current sum of \$151 million.

Both figures are from President Carter's budget request for the U.S. government, released yesterday, which was submitted to the Congress. However, Ronald Reagan, who can submit a revised version of the budget when he takes office, is expected to make major changes in the budget.

"It would be pointless to speculate," said NEA chairman Livingston Biddle when asked if the NEA budget would be revised by either the new administration or the Congress. "We're pleased with the sense of commitment the figures imply that the Carter administration feels."

NEA, NEH Seek Budget Increases For '82

"We're expecting a revised budget," said one aide to a member of Congress. "We're going to try to get the budget request for the Endowments through Congress, no matter what it is. If it's cut too low [by the Reagan administration] we'll try to increase it."

Richard Bishirjan, Reagan's transition leader for the NEH, said he had no idea whether the administration would revise the budget for the NEH.

During the past four years of the Carter administration, both Endowments have enjoyed funding increases. The NEA rose continually each year from an appropriation in fiscal year 1978 of \$123.5 million to the current fiscal year 1981 appropriation of \$158.6 million.

The proposed budget for the NEA includes \$13 million in increased arts program grants. The NEH budget includes a variety of increases in grants programs such as \$1 million more for elementary and secondary education program grants and \$1.5 million for media program (radio and television, humanities programs) grants.