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Museum Services Board (1991): News Article 01

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Providence
Journal
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Pell tries ^{D-2}
to save agency P.J

Sen. Claiborne Pell, in a last-ditch effort to save the embattled Institute for Museum Services, has



PELL

written President Reagan urging him to fill several vacancies on the agency's board.

The institute, which supports about a half-dozen Rhode Island museums and his-

torical groups to the tune of \$115,000 a year, was established in 1976 under Pell's authorship.

But the \$11.5-million agency is on Reagan's hit-list and just barely

survived a move last year by the administration to shut it down.

At the same time, the institute's 15-member board currently has only six members, not enough for a quorum. As a result, agency chairman Lilla Tower, wife of Texas Sen. John Tower, has taken the position that without a quorum, meetings aren't official and therefore don't have to be open to the public.

A Pell aide, in fact, was barred from the June meeting where pending grants were reportedly discussed. A dozen Rhode Island groups have applied to the agency for money this year, and the awards will probably be made in the next few weeks.

Pell is hoping, said the aide, that by having a functioning board in place, it will make it just a bit harder for the institute to be gobbled up by Reaganomics.

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