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Museum Services Board (1991): Speech 09

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CLAIBORNE PELL



U.S. SENATOR RHODE ISLAND

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HOLD FOR RELEASE

WEDNESDAY AT 1 P.M.
AUG. 30, 1978

FIRST MUSEUM SERVICE NATIONAL GRANTS ANNOUNCED BY PELL IN PROVIDENCE, R.I.

Senator Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.) whose legislation created the Institute of Museum Services, today announced the first round of national grants from the institute--including grants to four Rhode Island organizations--during a noon ceremony at the Rhode Island Historical Society on Benefit Street, Providence.

Mrs. Lee Kimche, executive director of the institute, and George Seybolt, chairman of the Museum Services Board, and many representatives of the museum community were scheduled to participate in the ceremony. The institute is an agency within the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The text of Pell's remarks:

"It is indeed a happy day for me to be here with you all. The occasion which brings us together today is one which I have eagerly anticipated for many years--in fact since 1971 when I first introduced the legislation in the Senate which would establish an Institute of Museum Services.

"Today that Institute is finally a working, living, and growing reality--and one which I am certain will continue to gather momentum over the next few years as the first Federal funding program specifically directed towards museums.

"Our intent in Congress was to provide every kind of museum--from aquaria all the way to zoos--with a program of Federal assistance in an area that is certainly the most difficult to raise private funds for and where the most critical need lies--I speak specifically of the area of operating expenses.

"The Museum Services Institute is the only Federal agency that makes this kind of general operating support available.

"So, without going into the arduous but ultimately successful legislative history of the Institute of Museum Services--let me say that it is a thrill to stand here with Mrs. Lee Kimche, the executive director of the Institute and with Mr. George Seybolt, chairman of the Museum Services Board and to announce before this distinguished group the very first round of grant awards made by the Institute.

"A total of 859 grants applications were received by the deadline of last June 2 and over the summer the small staff of the Institute worked many hours overtime to process these funding requests. Each one received the most careful review from panels of tremendously well-qualified and devoted museum professionals. As a group, the requests totaled over \$18 million.

"The results, I am delighted to report today, are especially nice for Rhode Island. Four of the six Rhode Island applicants are to receive some funding.

"The Rhode Island Historical Society, our generous and kind host today, will receive \$25,000--the maximum grant allowed in this first year of awards. The Old Slater Mill in Pawtucket has been awarded a \$10,000 grant. The Haffenreffer Museum of the American Indian in Bristol, a \$6,000 grant, and the South County Museum in North Kingstown, a \$3,000 grant.

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"What is so appealing to me about these particular grants is the fact that the institutions are spread across the state and that each one has a different type of collection and a distinct character all its own.

"The Rhode Island Historical Society, located in our one major metropolitan area, serves a statewide community with programs and exhibitions focusing--in a most comprehensive way--on all aspects of Rhode Island history.

"The Old Slater Mill, with its exhibits on labor and industrial history, is situated in the Blackstone Valley--once the heart of the textile industry.

"The Haffenreffer Museum on Mount Hope Bay in Bristol is a fine, small museum associated with Brown University and has impressive collections on the Eskimo and the American Indian.

"And, finally, the South County Museum, located in the southern, more rural part of the State, with a superb collection of specimens representing the material culture of our early industrial and farm life.

"I am proud of all our museums in Rhode Island and very much want to see our entire cultural community thrive and expand. These grants, though modest by many standards, are the affirmative beginning of a trend which will allow the educational centers which we call "museums" to expand their programs and exhibitions for the people of our State and the country.

"A final word of thanks and appreciation to the Rhode Island Historical Society for hosting this gathering today. Special thanks to Dennis Stark, Al Klyberg, and Kate Waterman for allowing us to hold this happy occasion on their home turf and for all they did to make it such a success."

After the ceremony, Pell and Mrs. Kimche are scheduled to tour a number of Rhode Island museums including the Old Slater Mill and the Childrens' Museum in Pawtucket, the Aldrich House and the Rhode Island School of Design's Art Museum in Providence, and the Haffenreffer Museum in Bristol.

A complete list of the institute's first round of national grants will be available at the noon ceremonies.

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