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July 2016

## Briefing Book: National Endowment for the Arts (1994): Speech 33

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**TALKING POINTS ON THE AMENDMENT TO INCREASE THE ALLOCATION OF NEA FUNDS TO STATE ARTS AGENCIES**

- o This amendment would restructure the Arts Endowment, virtually eliminating the Endowment's 17 discipline programs and, as a result, direct grants to arts organizations and artists, including arts education and folk arts projects.
- o The amendment would also significantly undercut the leveraging power of NEA funds. Most Endowment grants must be matched by nonfederal funds--from 1:1 to 4:1--and therefore generate significant revenue from private and public sources.

-- In FY 92, NEA awarded an estimated \$123 million to over 3,500 organizations. This resulted in an additional estimated \$1.4 billion generated in matching funds--a ten-fold match.

- o The Arts Endowment plays an unparalleled role in supporting projects with regional or national impact. States do not support activities outside their own borders. The amendment would jeopardize projects such as radio and television arts programming; touring of music, dance, opera, and theater; as well as art exhibitions, all of which increase availability of the arts for all Americans.

-- Many of NEA's grants to organizations in large cities, such as New York, Los Angeles, or Chicago, in fact directly serve citizens in small towns across America. Even though the NEA check may arrive in New York, the funding serves individuals in communities across the country.

- o Federal leadership in the arts in areas such as arts in education, encouragement of cultural diversity, and the importance of international exchange, would also be adversely affected by this amendment.
- o Since NEA was established in 1965, direct Federal grant support to arts organizations has stimulated a tremendous growth in arts organizations throughout the country. For example:

-- The number of professional non-profit theaters has grown from 56 in 1965 to a network of over 400 today. This network serves an audience that has grown from 5 million in 1965 to over 20 million currently;

-- Today there are 230 professional orchestras with budgets exceeding \$280,000, more than double the number with comparable budgets in 1965. These orchestras employ more than 40,000 musicians and administrative

staff. Attendance figures for symphony performances have risen from 17.5 million in 1971 to 26.7 million in 1991;

- Professional dance companies have increased from 37 in 1965 to over 250 today. Nearly \$100 million is spent in employment of dancers and administrative staff alone; millions more is spent for employment of designers, stagehands, lighting technicians, costumers, truckers, etc. Annual audiences have grown from 1 million to over 16 million;
  
- There are over 100 professional opera companies, compared to only 27 in 1965. They pay over \$250 million annually to their more than 20,000 artistic and administrative personnel. Audiences for their work have grown to 7.6 million in 1991, compared to 5.5 million in 1981.

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