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**TALKING POINTS -- OPPOSING AMENDMENT PROHIBITING THE ARTS
ENDOWMENT FROM MAKING GRANTS TO INDIVIDUALS 10/93**

- o Individual artists and museum professionals are as central to the arts as the scholar is to the humanities and the scientist to science. Individual artist support is central to the mission of the NEA - to foster nascent creative artists who have not yet developed the critical commercial success needed to sustain a career in the arts - and to assist artists of renown.

The objective of supporting individual artists is specified in the Arts Endowment's authorization statute. Other agencies, including the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Endowment for the Humanities all support the work of individuals because it is through their individual work that the cutting edge of science, of literature and medicine are maintained. Furthermore, it is unfair and discriminatory to single out one category of professionals - artists - and to prohibit them from receiving Federal funds.

- o To illustrate the harm of an amendment abolishing grants to individuals - such an amendment would eliminate the National Heritage Fellowships for folk artists and the American Jazz Masters Fellowships. These Fellowships support exemplary American artists in the traditional arts and in the uniquely American art of jazz.
- o Fellowships provide artists the opportunity to study, to research, and to actually create works. Most individuals simply do not make enough money to sustain a full-time career as a poet, composer, painter, craftsman, jazz artist, sculptor, novelist, playwright, or choreographer. Individual NEA fellowship grants - which usually run for one year - give artists the opportunity to concentrate and work for a short period of time in their disciplines. Private sector support for these individual artists is extremely limited at all levels. The NEA is practically the only help they get.
- o Pursuant to enactment of Arts, Humanities, and Museums Amendments of 1990, the National Endowment for the Arts has made major reforms in the peer panel procedures which govern the review of grant applications from individuals and organizations. The changes were made in response to complaints that the panels were not reflective of American cultural values and were limited primarily to individuals with interests in the arts.

Review panels now are selected from a much wider and more diverse universe of individuals, and membership is not limited to artists and art patrons. By law, panel members

now include people from all parts of the country and from diverse cultural and ethnic groups, and with diverse beliefs and aesthetic viewpoints. In addition, each panel includes a lay person, who does not make his or her living through the arts. Finally, the Arts Endowment has never permitted an artist to sit in judgement of his or her own application on a peer panel.