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July 25, 1978

Mr. Samuel Hope
American Council for the Arts in Education
115 East 92d Street
New York, NY 10028

Dear Mr. Hope:

Thank you for your letter with your questions and concerns about the upcoming White House Conference on the Arts.

Your question on the funding structure for the Conference is most timely. The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior is due to debate this issue in mark-up session in the next few days. A specific date cannot yet be determined. The fiscal 1979 budget for the Arts Endowment will be considered at the same time.

I would prefer to see "new" money appropriated for the Conference, over and above the Endowment's budget. It appears, however, that a portion of this sum, perhaps \$1.4 million, will be set aside to fund the Conference. I regret the figure is smaller than the one I had originally hoped for, but I am confident that a productive Conference can still result.

Answers to your other questions hinge very much on the appointment of the National Conference Planning Council. It is my hope that this 15 member panel, as well as a Conference director, will be named by President Carter in the next 4 to 6 weeks. This Council will be charged with structuring the Conference agenda and establishing guidelines for participants.

I appreciate very much having your thoughts on the White House Conference.

Warm regards.

Ever sincerely,

Claiborne Pell
Chairman
Subcommittee on Education,
Arts, and Humanities

AC:CF