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Claiborne Pell

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March 9, 1984

Dr. Ted Bartell
Advanced Technologies
12001 Sunrise Valley Drive
Reston, Virginia 22091

Dear Dr. Bartell:

Alexander Cray has relayed your questions to me regarding your evaluation of the Special Projects grant category at the Institute of Museum Services. I will endeavor to answer these questions below as you have requested.

1) Is there a specific rationale for continuing a Special Projects program at the Institute of Museum Services given the fact that it adds administrative costs?

Reply: As the ranking member of the Institute's authorizing Subcommittee and chief Senate sponsor of the Institute's enabling legislation, I have followed the development of the Institute's grant programs closely for many years. Our original intention in creating the agency was to provide our nation's museums with critically needed operating support. These General Operating Support grants have formed the core of the Institute's grant program since the first awards were made in 1978. It is my firm belief that this program should continue to be the major program within the Institute.

Over the years, however, a small percentage of program monies has gone to museums for Special Project support. These have been useful grants and in line with the spirit of the original legislation. Though there is no specific Congressional rationale for continuing the Special Projects grant category, I believe that a modest number of these grants are valid and are compatible with the emphasis on General Operating Support.

2) Do you, Senator Fell, receive mail from constituents relating to Special Projects grants at the Institute of Museum Services?

Reply: The State of Rhode Island has a small number of very fine museums each of which is aware of the Institute of Museum Services and the grant programs it offers. I cannot recall, however, receiving any constituent mail that related exclusively to the Special Projects program.

3) Would you be open to other budgetary options at the Institute in future years?

Reply: Yes, in this regard, the new IMS program for conservation projects has my fullest support. Conservation problems in museums have become very serious threats to the future survival of our nation's collections and their accessibility to the public. This new grant category will begin to address this critical need. I certainly would be happy to consider other similar proposals in the future.

With warm regards,

Ever sincerely,

Claiborne Pell

AC/ap