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April 28, 1980

Honorable Joseph D. Duffey  
Chairman  
National Endowment for the Humanities  
Washington, DC  20506

Dear Mr. Chairman:

It has come to my attention that the Rhode Island Black Heritage Society has recently submitted an application to the National Endowment for the Humanities for a pilot Youth Project grant.

The Black Heritage Society, incorporated in 1974, has become one of Rhode Island's leading community cultural organizations. Under the superb leadership of Rowena Stewart, the Society has amassed an impressive collection of artifacts, books, and documents relating to the history of Blacks in Rhode Island.

With the NEH Youth Grant, the Society hopes to involve approximately 200 youths in a project to research the music sung in Black churches prior to emancipation. The development of the Black spiritual will be related to the social, political, and religious life of Black Americans. On completion, the entire project will be submitted to the National Afro-American Museum Association for distribution around the country.

I want to express my special support for this grant request and hope, that after careful consideration, the Endowment will act favorably on it.

Warm regards.

Ever sincerely,

Claiborne Pell  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and Humanities