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Claiborne Pell

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April 6, 1981

Mr. Jeffray L. Staats
Architect - Planner
86 Washington Street
Newport, Rhode Island 02840

Dear Mr. Staats:

Thank you very much for your recent letter in regard to the proposed elimination of federal aid to historic preservation efforts and our nation's museums.

I am proud of the role I have played in helping develop the federal role in support of our nation's museums during my tenure as Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities. The Institute of Museum Services has had a particularly significant impact on the quality of services that museums provide for the public. I am very concerned about the effect that the proposed cuts would have in terminating this most crucial kind of support. The federal government has an equally legitimate role in supporting historic preservation programs.

This is clearly a time of belt-tightening as our economic situation is a paramount concern to all Americans. Unless inflation can be checked and the federal deficit reduced, all citizens will suffer. The President has proposed wide cuts in almost every area of federal spending to accomplish these objectives and I expect to support many of the proposed reductions.

In this period of budget restraint, however, museums and preservation programs should not be forced to bear such an unfair share of the burden. I could not in good conscience support the termination of programs which add so much to the quality and vitality of American life. You may be sure that I will do my best to assure that they are treated with fairness.

Thank you again for writing me. I appreciate knowing your views and will be sure to keep them in mind as we consider legislative action in these areas.

With warm regards,

Ever sincerely,

Claiborne Pell

AC:jhd