

1989

## Reauthorization: Hearing and Reports (1990): Correspondence 03

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The **NHA** National Humanities Alliance

21 September 1989

The Honorable Jamie L. Whittén  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-2401

Dear Mr. Chairman:

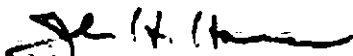
On behalf of the more than fifty organizations participating in the National Humanities Alliance, I am writing to urge that you recede to the Senate figure of \$8 million for the Javits fellowship program in the upcoming conference on the Department of Education appropriation for FY-1990.

While the difference between the \$6.77 million figure voted in the House, and \$8 million in the Senate is miniscule in terms of the Labor-HHS-ED appropriation, it makes a large difference in terms of the only federal fellowship program supporting graduate study in the humanities. Frankly, the numbers we are dealing with here are very small for a national fellowship competition -- the Senate figure would permit approximately 125 new fellowships in FY-90 whereas the House figure would allow only 40 new awards. This contrasts with an average of 175 new awards each year in the last three fiscal years.

The sparseness of support for graduate study in the humanities is often pointed to as a major cause of the more than 12 years on average required to obtain a PhD in the humanities (as opposed to around 7 years in mathematics). Last week, "Prospects for Faculty in the Arts and Sciences: A Study of Factors Affecting Demand and Supply 1987-2012" by William G. Bowen (President of the Mellon Foundation and former President of Princeton University) and Julie Ann Sosa, was released. The Bowen-Sosa study documents the very large shortfall in available faculty -- especially in the humanities and social sciences -- that the nation will face later in the coming decade. Now is the time that we should be moving to increase, and speed up the production of PhDs. While broad questions of national needs in higher education, including the impending faculty shortages, probably must wait for the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, we nonetheless urge that you shore-up the Javits funding to the \$8 million now.

For your information, I enclose a copy of a 9/13/89 New York Times report on the new Bowen-Sosa study. Also enclosed are a list of the members of the National Humanities Alliance and a brief overview of our activities.

Yours sincerely,

  
John H. Hammer  
Director