March 30, 2017

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment & Related Agencies
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment & Related Agencies
2256 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum:

We are writing to thank the Subcommittee for its past support of funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and respectfully request your support of a funding level of $155 million in the Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18) Interior Appropriations bill.

As you know, NEH is the main source of federal support for humanities research, teaching, preservation, public programming, and related activities in the U.S., providing competitive grant funding for research and scholarship in history, literature, foreign languages, and other fields that empower individuals with critical perspective and knowledge. Furthermore, NEH funding allocated through state humanities councils strengthens the cultural infrastructure of local communities in every state and territory throughout the nation.

Additionally, investment in the humanities advances vital national interests by fostering a globally competitive workforce, strengthening civic engagement, preserving our cultural heritage, and protecting our national security. As our world becomes increasingly more interconnected, building a solid foundation in the humanities becomes even more critical, which is why the majority of our CIA analysts, State Department officials and staff members and diplomats at embassies across the globe are graduates of the humanities – as are leaders ranging from the late Steve Jobs to former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey.

NEH has been an excellent steward of its annual federal appropriation, successfully leveraging more than $4.8 billion in non-federal support (adjusted for inflation) between 1965 and 2014. Currently, demand for humanities project support far exceeds funding availability, and
non-federal support for the humanities has declined in recent years, in part due to the current economic downturn. Sadly, as billions of dollars are rightfully invested in research and education in science and technology, the relative federal investment in the humanities falls further behind each year.

We understand the many difficult choices your Subcommittee faces in constructing its FY 2018 bill, but we believe that strong federal investments in the humanities are crucial for preserving America’s place as a world leader in education and innovation as well as provide our nation’s citizenry and workforce with the foundation necessary to tackle the challenges of today’s globalized world. We appreciate your past support of NEH and strongly urge your support for this request.

Sincerely,

David E. Price
Member of Congress

Leonard Lance
Member of Congress

Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress

James R. Langevin
Member of Congress

Ben Ray Luján
Member of Congress

John Yarmuth
Member of Congress

Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress
David Scott  
Member of Congress

Chris Smith  
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress

Bill Pascrell Jr.  
Member of Congress

Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress

Darren Soto  
Member of Congress

Adam Schiff  
Member of Congress

Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress

Paul Tonko  
Member of Congress

Sander M. Levin  
Member of Congress

Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress

John Sarbanes  
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress
Joseph P. Kennedy, III  
Member of Congress  

Daniel T. Kildee  
Member of Congress  

Ron Kind  
Member of Congress  

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress  

Dave Loebsack  
Member of Congress  

Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress  

David B. McKinley, P.E.  
Member of Congress  

Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress  

Kathleen M. Rice  
Member of Congress  

Louise Slaughter  
Member of Congress  

Mark Takano  
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Marc Veasey  
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Kathy Castor  
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Member of Congress
Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

Brian Higgins
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Doris Matsui
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Elise Stefanik
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Filemon Vela
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Judy Chu  
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Jim Costa  
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Collin C. Peterson  
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Susan A. Davis  
Member of Congress

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress

Peter Welch  
Member of Congress

C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger  
Member of Congress

Cheri Bustos  
Member of Congress

Scott Peters  
Member of Congress
Carlos Curbelo
Member of Congress

Vincente Gonzalez
Member of Congress

Jacky Rosen
Member of Congress

Tom Suozzi
Member of Congress

Mike Doyle
Member of Congress

Tulsi Gabbard
Member of Congress

Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress