



April 30, 2024



The Honorable Mike Simpson
Chairman
U.S. House Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
2007 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Ranking Member
U.S. House Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515



Dear Chairman Simpson and Ranking Member Pingree,

On behalf of the Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO (DPE), I urge the Subcommittee to fund the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) at no less than \$211 million each in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025.



Many members of DPE’s affiliate unions in the arts, entertainment, and media industries earn their living working on NEA and NEH-supported productions, programs, and performances. Still more union creative professionals who are employed now in the commercial parts of these industries started their careers working in the nonprofit arts and public media.



Providing at least \$211 million each for the NEA and NEH will ensure that the agencies can continue to support good-paying, family-supporting jobs for creative professionals in every state and congressional district. Through grants, seed money, and technical support, the two agencies help put people to work creating artistic and educational content that is available to Americans of all means, geographies, and abilities. NEA and NEH-funded programs help veterans heal from the invisible scars of war, inspire the next generation of creators and innovators, and unite people across small towns and big cities. Increasing the NEA and NEH annual funding level to at least \$211 million in FY 2025 is also an important step toward a historical full funding level of \$333 million, or \$1 per capita.



Increased NEA and NEH funding is also good for local economies. Research shows that audiences spend an estimated \$38.46 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission, on an assortment of goods and services within the communities where they attend cultural events.



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In addition, DPE believes the NEA and NEH are critical to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the arts, entertainment, and media industries. In February 2021, DPE and our affiliate unions in these industries released a “Policy Agenda for Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Arts, Entertainment, and Media Industries,” which contains policy solutions aimed



at creating diverse talent pipelines and developing an arts workforce that looks more like America. The NEA and NEH have a central role to play in this work.

In sum, the NEA and NEH are critical agencies for working people and local economies. Their work delivers a high return on investment and cannot be replaced by the private sector. I urge the Subcommittee to fund the NEA and NEH at no less than \$211 million each.

If you have any questions, please contact me or DPE Assistant to the President/Legislative Director, Michael Wasser, at mwasser@dpeafcio.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "JDorning", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jennifer Dorning, President