

**Congressman Leonard Lance's (NJ-7) Statement  
Before the  
House Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
February 28, 2017**

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

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

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum,

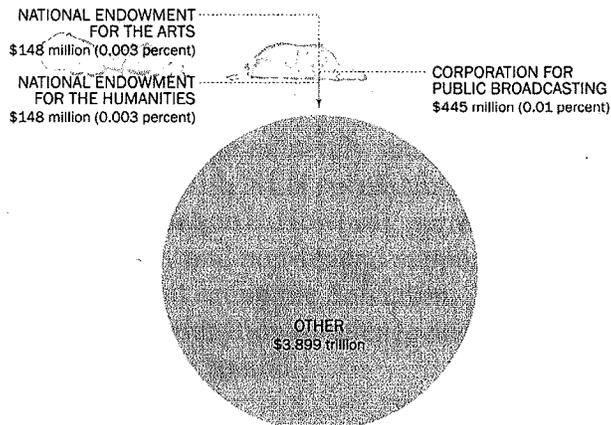
As you begin crafting the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies annual appropriation bill, I respectfully request that you adequately fund the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018. I greatly appreciate your efforts to fund these organizations in the past, and it is crucial they are preserved for the future.

Art is now, has been, and always will be a part of our Nation's fabric. It was President Kennedy in 1963, while speaking of Robert Frost at the dedication of the library at Amherst College that would bear his name, who said that art "establishes the basic human truth which must serve as the touchstone of our judgment" and that the artist "becomes the last champion of the individual mind and sensibility against an intrusive society and an officious state."

This year, the NEA and NEH each received \$148 million, 0.006% of nearly \$4 trillion federal budget.

**Federal spending in 2016**

Data on federal outlays during the fiscal year.



Despite this comparatively meager appropriation, federal investments in the arts and humanities have a powerful multiplying effect. Each federal grant dollar spent requires a non-federal match. NEA and NEH officials estimate that this private-public partnership generates average investments of approximately eight times the grant amount in State, local, and private funds. Federal arts funding is a catalyst for economic development and job creation. More than 3.35 million Americans are employed by the arts—a larger workforce group than the legal profession, medical doctors or agricultural workers—and nearly one million U.S. businesses spend more than \$61 billion annually in our local economies.

With the mission to bring the arts to all Americans, the NEA has supported arts activities in every Congressional district in the United States, including inner cities, rural communities as well as in support of our Nation's military families. Few other federal investments boast such a widespread benefit to all Americans and no other federal agency or private organization facilitates nationwide access to exceptional art.

Congressional support for the NEA has helped to sustain support in local communities for arts education, which has been proven to help close the education achievement gap and provide a lifelong benefit to children and adults. Students with an education rich in the arts have better grade point averages in core academic subjects, score better on standardized tests and have lower drop-out rates than students without arts education.

Additionally, as you know, NEH is the primary source of federal support for humanities research, teaching, preservation, public programming, and related activities in the U.S. The Endowment provides competitive grant funding for research and scholarship in history, literature, foreign languages, and other fields that provide individuals with critical ethical, cultural, and historical perspective. Additionally, NEH funding allocated through state humanities councils strengthens the cultural infrastructure of local communities in every state and territory across the nation.

Investment in the humanities also advances vital U.S. 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 vital to U.S. interests. That 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 outstanding steward of the relatively small amount of federal support it receives annually. Between 1965 and 2014, NEH successfully leveraged more than \$4.8 billion in non-federal support (adjusted for inflation). However, current 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. Each year, 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.

We again thank you for your leadership on this important issue and urge you to continue your support for our nation's arts by providing sufficient resources for the NEA and NEH in the FY 2018 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this request and for your continued support of the arts and humanities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leonard Lance", written over a horizontal line.

Leonard Lance  
Co-Chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus  
Member of Congress

A faint, illegible handwritten signature or mark at the bottom of the page.