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President & CEO

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Director of Operations & Finance

April 9, 2019

Dear Member of Congress,

On behalf of its members, the board of directors of Grantmakers in the Arts respectfully requests that Congress support appropriations of \$167.50 million for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) respectively, as well as \$262 million for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), and \$480 million for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), and to reject the elimination of these agencies as proposed by the Trump Administration's Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 budget request. Due to the important role that these agencies play in our country's cultural vitality and creative economy, we do not believe that they should be eliminated, as proposed by the Trump Administration, or that their budgets should be reduced.

Grantmakers in the Arts is the national association of private and community foundations, corporate funders, and government agencies that support communities across America by funding nonprofit arts organizations and artists. The National Endowment for the Arts, along with its peer cultural federal institutions, are immeasurably important to the ecosystem that has developed over the past fifty years in every community. The elimination of these agencies will have a detrimental impact on creative opportunities and education for American families, and will send a message to the world that Americans do not value our culture, our creative edge, and our history.

It is the federal government's role to assure equitable and geographic distribution of resources. Private foundations and individuals will not be able to adequately fill the void left by these agencies. Their loss will have a disproportionately negative effect on rural areas and inner cities across America. The elimination of federal funds in these areas will likely be followed by the loss of their required local matching dollars. A wide range of diverse programs which effectively use the arts to inspire and motivate will be eliminated. These include programs focused on making an impact in areas such as education, healthcare, and criminal justice, as well as programs which support a wide range of individuals including the elderly, veterans, children, and at-risk youth.

For over 50 years, every United States President has supported these federal agencies. They efficiently coordinate and incentivize activities between states and regions, provide leadership in the areas of national research and data collection, and give a nation-wide focus to preserving and promoting America's rich cultural history and art forms. Their grants to states and organizations provide a carrot that requires matching funds from foundations, corporations, individuals, and state and local governments.

As debate on federal funding priorities for FY2020 continues, we strongly urge you to support continued appropriation for the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and to reject any proposal such as the President's FY2020 budget request to eliminate funding for these agencies. These agencies reflect the soul of our nation, the conscience of our people, and the creative edge which will define the future of our country.

Sincerely,

Glyn Northington, Chair
Grantmakers in the Arts

Eddie Torres, President
Grantmakers in the Arts