September 20, 2013

Dear Representative,

We write to express our serious concern with the drastic funding cut for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) contained in the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies appropriations bill, as passed out of subcommittee last July. A cut of this magnitude would have a profoundly negative impact on American interests at home and abroad.

The humanities reach across a broad spectrum of economic activity. They provide workers with the critical thinking and communication skills needed to thrive in an information economy. They broaden our comprehension of other nations, enhancing our competitiveness in an overwhelmingly global marketplace. Skills learned from the humanities are a necessary complement to technical education in our interconnected economy, allowing workers to successfully incorporate their training into the workplace. The abilities to read, write, comprehend and analyze are highly sought by employers struggling to fill jobs in emerging fields, with companies spending more than $3 billion annually just on remedial writing training for their employees, according to the National Humanities Alliance.

The humanities also provide the language, literacy and cultural understanding needed for successful diplomatic, intelligence and military initiatives overseas. Our security depends on a deeper grasp of the ideologies, religions and cultures of diverse communities across the world, and humanities education provides that knowledge to those who protect and represent us on a global level.

Moreover, by their very nature, the humanities preserve and expand the fundamental underpinnings of American society. Humanities research provides scholars with an opportunity to apply their expertise to solving many of America’s great challenges. Through research and teaching, the humanities strengthen our nation, promoting an active and informed civic life through a greater knowledge of our common cultural heritage.

Despite a relatively small funding level, the NEH is a key component in enhancing our economic competitiveness and in advancing our national security interests. The thousands of grants and other programs supported by the NEH are critical to these endeavors. We strongly urge you to support the level of funding for the NEH proposed in the President’s budget request, and reject efforts to slash funding and damage our economy, security and cultural standing.

Sincerely,

Molly Corbett Broad
President

MCB/ldw
On behalf of:

ACT
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Association of University Professors
American Council on Education
American Indian Higher Education Consortium
APPA
Association of American Colleges and Universities
Association of American Law Schools
Association of American Universities
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Association of Research Libraries
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council of Independent Colleges
Educational Testing Service
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
University Professional & Continuing Education Association