



ANTHONY RENDON

SPEAKER *of the ASSEMBLY*
Sixty-Third Assembly District

March 1, 2017

Ms. Jane Chu, Chair
National Endowment for the Arts
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20506-0001

Dear Chairwoman Chu:

We write to you today to add our voices to those speaking out against potential cuts to the National Endowment for the Arts.

As the recipient of nearly \$9 million each year, California knows the value of NEA grants, and feels their impact, in places urban and rural, from the ocean to the mountains and from our southern border to our northern counties.

We are concerned for the preservation of the Endowment, but do not fear for art itself. Art survives, and has thrived throughout history under some of the most difficult conditions imaginable.

World-renowned organizations like the San Francisco Ballet or the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art turn NEA grants into experiences that deeply affect great numbers of people, but we also know that these are groups whose existence does not turn on a single grant.

We're most concerned about the schoolchild in rural Kern County who learns to draw from a professional artist in a school-based program. We worry about the low-income San Francisco teen who learns to produce video after school, instead of hanging out on the streets.

We worry about the community of Quincy, hard hit by the decline of the lumber industry. With their 2017 grant, Quincy residents can still forge a rural identity through a downtown mural with themes they will choose.

These grants have outsized impacts. Local matches and economic multipliers make these funds influential in our communities, not only artistically, but economically.

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Of course, the NEA's most lasting beauty is the impact it has on a micro level, influencing one person at a time by providing a mind-opening exposure to the arts, an experience that can lift spirits.

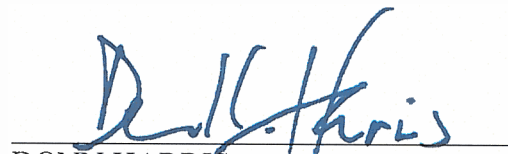
We reiterate our support and hope that the federal funding for the National Endowment for the Arts remains, at a minimum, at its current level.

We appreciate your consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,



ANTHONY RENDON
Speaker of the Assembly



DONN HARRIS
Chair of the California Arts Council