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F. S. M. Hodsoll

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NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR
THE ARTS

WASHINGTON
D.C. 20506



A Federal agency advised by the
National Council on the Arts

April 24, 1986

Honorable Pat Williams
Chairman
Subcommittee on Select Education
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Pat:

I am writing to request clarification of certain provisions added to Section 5(g)(2) of Public Law 89-209, The National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, by the recent reauthorization of that Act. In order to be eligible for support under this Section, the statute requires that states submit an application accompanied by a plan which now includes, inter alia,

- (i) assurances that the State agency has held, after reasonable notice, public meetings in the State to allow all groups of artists, interested organizations, and the public to present views and make recommendations regarding the State plan; and
- (ii) a summary of such recommendations and the State agency's response to such recommendations;

The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies has related its opinion that these meetings should not have to be held on an annual basis but should follow the States' planning cycles, which in most cases are on a two or three year basis. We agree. The Endowment has long encouraged broadbased multi-year planning on the part of state arts agencies and requires states to submit such plans. These plans are used in conjunction with annual applications for the award of basic state grants under Section 5 (g).

We are uncertain, however, about the intent of the law with regard to the frequency with which the required public meetings must be held. The legislative history of the amendments to Section 5(g)(2) is silent on this point. In order that we may advise the state

arts agencies on this point as promptly as possible, we are requesting clarification from the Committee. We hope the Committee will allow us to interpret this provision so as to require public meetings only in conjunction with the state arts agency's regular planning process.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,



F. S. M. Hodsoll
Chairman

cc: Honorable William D. Ford
Honorable Steve Bartlett
Honorable E. Thomas Coleman
Honorable Robert T. Stafford
Honorable Claiborne Pell