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Community Arts Partnership Act (1994): Correspondence 01

Edward H. Able Jr.

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Able, Edward H. Jr., "Community Arts Partnership Act (1994): Correspondence 01" (1994). *Community Arts Partnership Act (1994)*. Paper 16.
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American
Association
of
Museums

Edward H. Able, Jr.
Executive Director

August 5, 1994

The Hon. Claiborne Pell
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Pell:

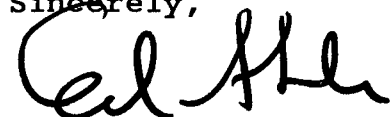
Regarding the cultural partnerships provision of the Elementary & Secondary Education Act (Community Arts Partnership Act in the House version, Cultural Partnerships for At-Risk Children and Youth Act in the Senate version), I want to express sincere gratitude to all the members and staff who have been working on this issue. Keeping in mind that the two versions each contain much that is worthy of praise, I would like to note the museum community's position on two points.

First, we urge the conferees to drop the "trigger" that makes funding for cultural partnerships dependent on the funding level of the NEA. There is no reason to suppose that funding the partnerships would further decrease NEA funding, since the programs envisioned in both House and Senate provisions differ markedly from current NEA programs. They would fund science and environmental studies, for example, as well as the arts; they would encompass a wider range of institutions than the NEA currently deals with; and they would take place mainly outside the schools during non-school hours, as opposed to current NEA practice of mostly funding programs of artists-in-residence in the schools themselves.

Second, although we have many friends at the cultural agencies, we ask the conferees to allow the Department of Education, rather than a new committee composed mainly of agency representatives, to run the new partnerships. Let me emphasize that art museums, as well as history and science museums, make this request because they must be recognized as part of the formal educational fabric. Effectively cutting the Department of Education out of running the partnerships would not aid in such recognition.

Let me also emphasize that our position on these two points is not meant in any degree to indicate a weakening of support for the cultural agencies. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Edward H. Able, Jr.

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