



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

August 5, 2013

Congressman Peter DeFazio
Congressman Greg Walden
Congressman Earl Blumenauer
Congressman Kurt Schrader
Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici

US Senator Ron Wyden
US Senator Jeff Merkley

Dear Oregon Delegation,

On July 31, the House Appropriations Committee considered the FY 2014 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, which includes a 49% cut or \$71 million in funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The NEH provides important provide critical support for humanities teaching, preservation, public programming, and research. We urge you to oppose the cut and fund the Endowment at the \$154.4 million proposed by the Administration.

A recent report commissioned by a bipartisan group of members of Congress and released by the Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences in June calls on the United States to increase its investment in the humanities from both private and public sources in order to achieve a set of widely-shared national goals best summarized as: opportunity for all Americans, economic competitiveness and innovation, productive global engagement, and strong communities. The commission recognized that the National Endowment for the Humanities is central to our ability to achieve these goals as it plays a critical and unique national role in fostering innovation in humanities research, teaching, preservation, and programming by providing catalytic support to thousands of individuals and organizations undertaking important work in communities around the country.

The benefits to the people of Oregon, Oregon's students, and institutions of higher education are clear. The NEH has funded important humanities research at Oregon's public and private institutions of higher education. Since 2003, University of Oregon researchers and programs have earned more than one hundred NEH grants totaling \$5.5 million to support activities associated with the Museum of Natural and Cultural History, the Oregon Bach Festival, the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, Oregon Folklife Network, science education in Oregon communities, and many other projects.

Many projects stand out. One particularly important activity involves the National Digital Newspaper Program, a NEH–Library of Congress partnership, where the

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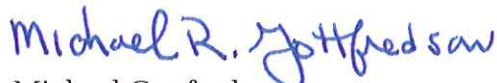
An equal-opportunity, affirmative-action institution committed to cultural diversity and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

University of Oregon is digitizing around 300,000 pages of historic newspapers such as the Oregonian, Daily Morning Astorian and the Sumpter Miner from 1860 to 1922. Support for this work includes a \$365,000 NEH grant in 2009 and two subsequent supplements from NEH to continue making Oregon's history available online. Funds from the NEH program were leveraged to receive additional grants and donations for over \$414,000. The program is part of the Library of Congress' Chronicling America Program. The project has recovered significant pieces of our state's "lost history," preserving it for the future and making it easily searchable. Local users have come from 153 Oregon cities and towns, with especially heavy use from rural areas, as well as all fifty states and 191 countries around the world.

One of the University of Oregon's missions is to serve the people of Oregon by enabling access to premier cultural education and programming. Direct responses from the public have highlighted how Oregon's digitized newspapers have aided in research including: the fishing industry, petroleum and coal, mineral and land rights, and environmental efforts, as well as enriching the knowledge of the formation of our state and country's laws and voting practices and personal family histories.

Please keep this impact and benefits to Oregonians in mind. When Congress returns in September, we urge you to oppose cuts to the National Endowment for the Humanities and preserve the Administration's request for \$154.4 million in funding.

Sincerely,



Michael Gottfredson
President



Kimberly Andrews Espy
Vice President for Research and Innovation
Dean of the Graduate School