

Chairman Opening Statement: James P. Moran

National Endowment for the Humanities

FY 2011 Budget Hearing

House Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations

March 17, 2010

9:30 a.m.

Chairman Leach, welcome to your first official budget hearing. I am delighted to welcome you here to discuss your Fiscal Year 2011 proposed budget and look forward to discussing your priorities.

Chairman Leach and I have a long history working together. We spent several years together when he was a member of this Institution and I look forward to continuing our relationship. I know he brings tremendous leadership to the Endowment as its Chairman.

In 1965, our Nation committed to the progress and scholarship of the Humanities by enacting Public Law 89-209: The National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965. As stated in Section Two:

Democracy demands wisdom and vision in its citizens. It must therefore foster and support a form of education, and access to the arts and the humanities, designed to make people of all backgrounds and, wherever located, masters of their technology and not its unthinking servants.

I find this statement particularly relevant at this point in time. Each year, our technology is expanding exponentially, and all are exposed to a greater diversity of ideas, people and places.

This technology has the potential to be a great unifier of ideas. How we use, analyze and manage information is critical. As the quote reminds us, active citizenship is the very essence of democracy and requires that we understand how to think creatively, analyze critically and communicate effectively.

Chairman Leach, it is within this context that I am interested in learning more about your Bridging Cultures Initiative and Civility Tours and what you hope to accomplish with these activities.

Overall, your proposed 2011 budget is fiscally restrained but still sustains our Nation's commitment to the Humanities. Your request of \$161 million is \$6 million less than what you received last year.

As you know, for the past several years this Subcommittee made increases to restore funding that was cut from your budget in the 1990s. From Fiscal Year 2007 to Fiscal Year 2010, we have provided \$24 million dollars above what the current and prior administrations have proposed. The Endowment has done an exceptional job with these resources, and I am eager to hear how your \$6 million dollar cut would affect your programs.

I look forward to discussing these issues with you, but first

Mr. Simpson do you have any opening comments?