

Petition to US Senate and House Appropriations Subcommittees

IN SUPPORT OF NEA, NEH AND CPB

Latin American Studies Association

The Executive Council, past presidents, and members of the Latin American Studies Association appeal to the United States Congress to continue full funding to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). Founded fifty years ago, the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) is the largest professional Association in the world for individuals and institutions engaged in the study of Latin America. With over 12,000 members, nearly 60 percent of whom reside outside the United States, LASA is the one association that brings together experts on Latin America from all disciplines and diverse occupational endeavors, across the globe. Our mission is to foster intellectual discussion, research, and teaching on Latin America, the Caribbean, and its people throughout the Americas; to promote the interests of its diverse membership; and to encourage civic engagement through network building and public debate.

The total defunding of NEH, NEA, and CPB proposed in the 2018 federal budget represents an abandonment of the role that creative production and scholarship in the arts and humanities has played historically in United States, as well as obscures the positive image that the U.S. projects in the international arena. NEA has supported the work of numerous Latino artists, authors, musicians, and filmmakers in the United States. NEH has facilitated the research of countless Latin Americanist historians, literary scholars, and anthropologists, work that has not only entered the core of university curricula in the U.S., but has influenced the development of these disciplines in Latin America. The support of these institutions has been instrumental in disseminating the results of scholarly research and artistic production to a broader audience. Henry Louis Gates' pathbreaking four-part television series, "Black in Latin America," was funded in part by CPB. NEH's "Latino Americans: 500 Years of History" supported over 200 institutions, including libraries, historical societies, museums, and civic associations, to organize festivals, collect oral histories, and conduct discussion groups about Latino history and culture during 2015-2016.

Funding of NEH, NEA, and CPB, whose budgets total less than \$800 million, comprises only a tiny fraction of the billions of dollars included in the annual budget of the United States. Nevertheless, the three institutions make immeasurable contributions to schools, universities, libraries, museums, and theaters across the United States, immensely enriching the lives of Americans and sharing the creative potential of the U.S. with artists, musicians, scholars, writers, and the general public of countries throughout the world.

We petition you to continue to fully fund the NEH, NEA, and CPB, ensuring that the United States remains a beacon for creativity and the production of knowledge.

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