

LARSON VOTES IN FAVOR OF INCREASED ARTS FUNDING

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 18, 2002
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WASHINGTON, D.C.- U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) yesterday voted in favor of an amendment to the Interior Appropriations bill (H.R. 5093) to increase funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) by \$5 million and for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) by \$10 million. The amendment brings the total funding for the NEH to \$126 million and funding for the NEA to \$99 million for Fiscal Year 2003.

Larson stated: "Increased funding for the NEA and NEH will strengthen Connecticut's commitment to providing access to art and cultural opportunities to our residents through the Connecticut Humanities Council and the Connecticut Commission on the Arts. With funding for the arts reduced in many states as a result of declining revenues, great emphasis is needed to increase support for the arts and humanities from the federal government."

Larson also voted against an amendment offered by Rep. Thomas Tancredo (CO-06) that would have cut funding for the NEA by \$50 million. The Amendment failed by a vote of 123-300.

In Fiscal Year 2001, organizations in the First Congressional District received \$955,500 in direct grants from the NEA and organizations in the State of Connecticut received a total of \$1.5 million in direct grants from the NEH. Congressman Larson authored a letter to the appropriations committee requesting that funding for state humanities councils be increased to \$40 million for Fiscal Year 2003. It is estimated that overall NEH grants fell from \$10 million in 1994 to an average of only \$3 million for the State of Connecticut.

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Congressman Larson is a member of the Congressional Arts Caucus