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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

April 1, 2019

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing on behalf of the County of Santa Barbara in support of funding for the National Endowment for the Arts in the *FY 2020 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations* bill.

Arts and culture are a proven force in developing sustainable economic and community vitality. Recent studies of arts-grant funding initiatives at the national and state level demonstrate the dynamic impact arts and culture have on the economy and on civic engagement.

Grant funds from the NEA are used to attract private sector support and to leverage public sector funds. The benefits include improved quality of life and lifelong learning, public places and parks activated through the arts, and the preservation of cultural assets and practices and increased cross-cultural understanding. Art has also proven to be invaluable as a tool in stimulating and creating economic development and neighborhood revitalization. In Santa Barbara County, the not-for-profit arts sector generates almost 6000 full-time-equivalent jobs for residents.

As Congress drafts the *FY 2020 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations* bill, please continue to provide funding for the NEA and resist the Administration's proposals to eliminate the agency.

Sincerely yours,

Don Gilchrest
Washington Representative

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