

## Public Witness Testimony

**Submitted to the Interior, Environment & Related Agencies Subcommittee,  
Committee on Appropriations, U.S. House of Representatives**

***Regarding FY 2012 Funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities***

**Michael Brintnall—President, National Humanities Alliance (April 1, 2011)**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of the National Humanities Alliance (NHA) and its 104 member organizations and institutions, we write to express strong support for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Our members, and the thousands of teachers, scholars, humanities organizations and institutions they represent, use NEH grants to maintain a strong system of academic research, education and public programs in the humanities. ***For FY 2012, we respectfully urge the Subcommittee to continue funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) at the FY 2010 enacted level of \$167.5 million.***

### **Overview**

As you know, the President's FY 2012 Budget proposes \$146.3 million in funding for NEH, including \$118.2 million for program funds and \$28.0 million for administration. This represents an overall cut of \$21.2 million (about 13%) from the NEH's FY 2010 budget level. For NEH program funds (which support grants at the national and state levels), the President's budget represents an even deeper decrease of \$21.8 million (about 16%) from the FY 2010 level of \$140 million. *We do not support the cuts proposed by the Administration*, and are especially concerned about the deep erosion of funds that the President's Budget represents for NEH competitive grants nationwide.

In recent years, the National Humanities Alliance has proposed significant new funding to help rebuild and expand NEH programs, that were cut dramatically in the mid-1990s. We recognize the seriousness of the fiscal situation faced by Congress and the Administration, and understand that now is not the time to request an increase for this agency. However, we do not believe that cutting a relatively small discretionary program like NEH—which represents a tiny fraction of the federal budget and plays such an important role—is the solution to the current crisis.

- While much smaller than many of its counterparts in the federal government, such as the National Science Foundation, NEH is the lead federal agency tasked with advancing and preserving knowledge in a broad range of academic fields, and it plays a central role in supporting the nation's education and research infrastructure.
- NEH grants support high-quality resources, materials, and programs that reach individuals and communities in every state and district in this country.
- NEH funding is an extremely efficient investment of taxpayer funds, with most NEH grants leveraging significant direct or indirect non-federal support.

A \$22 million cut to NEH will have a significant and detrimental impact on the ability of this agency to fulfill its mission to the American people, without resolving the deficit in any meaningful way. Moreover, these cuts will deprive the American people of critical resources at a time when they are needed more than ever.

## **Importance of the Humanities**

The public value of the humanities is unquestioned. They enrich individual lives, they bring communities together, they underpin our civic institutions, they bring forth our history and our shared values, they make possible how our heritage is understood and preserved, and they support a broadly educated and competitive workforce.

The humanities encompass a broad range of fields—including the study of languages, linguistics, literature, history, law, government, philosophy, archaeology, comparative religion, ethics, and more. From the basic building blocks of early education, to the highest levels of academic attainment, humanities fields provide essential skills and competencies, and support critical modes of thought. Students who get a sound humanities education, focused on careful reading and disciplined writing, do better in all fields of study, and are sought after by employers. Study and knowledge of the humanities prepare us to become active and informed citizens, as well as to succeed in the increasingly competitive, and global workforce.

Almost all sectors and trades depend on a U.S. workforce with access to high-quality education in humanities fields across the educational continuum. But the humanities workforce itself is significant, with more than 2.5 million Americans directly engaged in a broad range of humanities professions—K-12 teachers, college/university faculty, museum curators, librarians, translators, news analysts, and others. This figure does not include the many trades that require professionals with advanced aptitude or training in the humanities, such as: advertising, marketing, public administration, law, national security, intelligence, international trade, arts, entertainment, science, engineering, health, and more.

Finally, the humanities represent areas of expertise vital to addressing complex policy challenges—from informing medical ethics, to understanding the root causes of world hunger, to fighting illiteracy. And they support capacities especially relevant to the 21st century: knowledge of world cultures, religions, and languages; understanding of U.S. history and democratic traditions; and humanistic perspectives to evaluate the implications of scientific and technological advances.

## **National Needs**

As the NEH founding legislation recognizes, there is a clear federal role in supporting the humanities, just as there is for the sciences and other fields: “An advanced civilization must not limit its efforts to science and technology alone, but must give full value and support to the other great branches of scholarly and cultural activity in order to achieve a better understanding of the past, a better analysis of the present, and a better view of the future.” At a time of rapid globalization, technological development, and severe economic challenges, the wisdom of this statement is *as evident today – if not more so* – than it was almost fifty years ago.

According to many corporate executives, higher education leaders, and other experts, the U.S. liberal arts curriculum in our nation’s schools, colleges, and universities is at risk. The U.S. has a long tradition of fostering broad access to education that integrates learning across the sciences, mathematics, and the humanities. Even as we move away from this approach, it is aggressively being emulated by China and other nations around the world who have identified this aspect of our educational system as a unique driver of U.S. economic leadership and innovation in the last century.

In recent studies, employers rank reading and writing as top deficiencies in new hires, with more than a third of employers finding high school graduates “deficient” in reading comprehension, and “written communications” topping the list of applied skills found lacking in high school and college graduates. This comes at a real cost—with annual spending on remedial writing courses estimated at more than \$3.1 billion for large corporations and \$221 million for state employers.

As the impact of the recession continues to be felt around the country, many Americans are turning to further education, and local resources like libraries, museums, and state humanities councils as a means of finding jobs, and connecting with their communities at a time of crisis. While demand for their services increases, many non-profit humanities institutions and organizations are struggling to maintain access to programs, due to continued constriction of traditional revenue sources (e.g., endowments, private giving, state and local funding). School districts are cutting back on teachers and course offerings, and many colleges and universities—especially public institutions—have closed humanities departments or cut back on full-time instructors, despite growing wait-lists for basic courses like writing and history.

### **The NEH Role**

The NEH is the lead federal agency with the mission to create, preserve, and disseminate knowledge in the humanities that is essential for the achievements described above. Each year, NEH awards hundreds of competitive, peer-reviewed grants to a broad range of nonprofit educational organizations and institutions, and to individual scholars, throughout the country. Grantees include: universities, four- and two-year colleges, humanities centers, research institutes, museums, historical societies, libraries, archives, scholarly associations, K-12 schools, local education agencies, public television/film/radio producers, and more. These grants help support educational advancement, professional development, jobs and institutional activities for thousands of students, teachers, faculty, and others engaged in the humanities in communities across the U.S. every year.

As noted above, we are especially concerned about the decline in funding for NEH competitive grants. From the community’s perspective, NEH competitive grants fall into two categories:

- ‘Core Programs’ (*Research, Education, Preservation, Digital Humanities, Challenge Grants, and Public Programs*)
- ‘Special Initiatives’ (*Bridging Cultures, We the People*)

NEH grants are known for their quality, and their ability to leverage significant non-federal funding for humanities projects nationwide. They are also extremely competitive. Annually, demand for humanities project support through NEH *far exceeds funding available*. In FY 2010, NEH received 5,205 competitive grant applications representing more than \$515 million in requested funds (a 20% increase in the number of applications submitted for the previous year). Of these, NEH was able to fund only 16.6% of the proposals submitted. This is too low, when compared to recent rates as high as 32% reported by grant-making agencies like the National Science Foundation (NSF), and means that excellent work vital to the humanities is unable to go forward.

Examples of underfunded NEH grant programs include: *fellowships and collaborative research; digital humanities projects; professional development for teachers and faculty; preservation of historically-significant collections; public film, radio, television, and digital media projects; and challenge grants* to build institutional capacity and leverage non-federal support.

## Impact of the President's Budget Request

*Competitive Programs*—Unfortunately, the President's Budget for FY 2012 would deeply and disproportionately cut NEH competitive grants. Collectively, total funding provided for competitive grants through the NEH Core Programs (listed above) would decrease from \$79.6 million in FY 2010 to \$70.8 million in FY 2012—an \$8.7 million (or 11%) cut. In addition, the President's Budget terminates *We the People*, an initiative launched in 2004 to advance understanding of U.S. history and culture (funded at \$14.5 million in FY 2010). Since its inception, *We the People* has been structured to redirect funds across NEH programs and divisions. But by cutting *We the People*, rather than allocating its resources to the NEH programs that underpin it, the budget proposal further weakens NEH core programs. While amounts have varied annually, in recent years, NEH core programs have received, on average, roughly half of *We the People* funds (\$7.4 million in FY 2010). ***Factoring in termination of We the People, we estimate the total impact of the President's Budget on NEH competitive grants would be a reduction of at least \$16 million (or 18%).***

Looked at over a longer time frame, the situation is even more difficult. Funding for NEH competitive grants through the national core programs is very low compared to past years, and we cannot let it fall further behind. In FY 1994 (the nominal funding peak for the NEH), collectively, funding for these programs was provided at \$116.4 million. Adjusted for inflation, this would be equivalent to \$173.7 million in today's dollars—more than double the current level.

*Special Initiatives*—The President's Budget would provide modest, new funding of \$4 million for the agency's *Bridging Cultures* initiative, a program developed by NEH Chairman Jim Leach to enhance Americans' understanding of the nation's rich cultural heritage, as well as the cultural complexity of the world in which we live. The National Humanities Alliance has advocated for many years for expansion of the agency's programmatic coverage in areas of international education, global competency, and cultural understanding, and we welcome this effort.

*NEH Federal/State Partnership*—NEH extends its reach through annual operating grants to state humanities councils located in every state and U.S. territory. For FY 2012, the Administration has requested \$40.1 million, a nominal decrease of \$270,000 from the FY 2010 enacted level. There is a significant decrease, however, when also factoring in the termination of *We the People*, of a total of roughly \$7 million (or 15%).

## Conclusion

This Subcommittee stands as steward to many of our nation's greatest shared natural and cultural resources. We recognize that Congress faces unprecedented and difficult choices in this and coming years. Nevertheless, we ask the Subcommittee to consider the demonstrated contributions of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the importance of continued funding for the humanities through NEH as an investment in the nation's long-term economic recovery and competitiveness, the strength and vitality of our civic institutions, the preservation and understanding of our diverse cultural heritage, and the lives of our citizens. Thank you for consideration of our request, and for your past and continued support for the humanities.

*Founded in 1981, the National Humanities Alliance is a coalition of nonprofit organizations and institutions dedicated to the advancement of education, research, preservation and public programs ([www.nhalliance.org](http://www.nhalliance.org)).*

House Testimony of Ken Burns  
President, Florentine Films  
Washington, DC  
4-14-11

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: It is an honor for me to appear before you today on behalf of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and I am grateful that you have given me this opportunity to express my thoughts.

Let me say from the outset--as a film producer and as a father of four daughters increasingly concerned about the sometimes dangerous landscape of our television environment--that I am a passionate life-long supporter of the NEH and its unique role in helping to stitch our exquisite and often fragile culture together, and in fostering creativity and scholarship and the transmission of the best of that culture to future generations.

Few institutions provide such a direct, grassroots way for our citizens to participate in the shared glories of their common past, in the power of the priceless ideals that have animated our remarkable republic and our national life for more than two hundred years, and in the inspirational life of the mind and the heart that an engagement with the arts and humanities always provides. It is my wholehearted belief that anything that threatens this institution weakens our country. It is as simple as that.

For more than 30 years I have been producing historical documentary films, celebrating the special messages American history continually directs our way. The subjects of these films range from the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge and the Statue of Liberty to the life of the turbulent demagogue Huey Long; from the graceful architecture of the Shakers to the history of our national parks; from the sublime pleasures and unexpected lessons of our national pastime and Jazz to the searing, transcendent experience of our Civil War and the Second World War; from Thomas Jefferson and Lewis and Clark to Frank Lloyd Wright, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Mark Twain. I even made a film on the

history of this magnificent Capitol building and the much-maligned institution that is charged with conducting the people's business.

Throughout my professional life, I have been fortunate to work closely with the National Endowment for the Humanities. Nearly all of my films have been produced with the support and encouragement of the National Endowment for the Humanities, either at the state or national level. I first received an NEH grant in 1979, as I embarked on my first project for public television, a film about the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge. At this very early stage of my career, the experience of competing successfully for an NEH grant helped me set high standards of excellence...in filmmaking, writing, scholarship, and even budgeting.

Over the years, I would apply many times to the NEH for support on a variety of projects. Working with NEH staff and humanities scholars ensured that my projects stayed true to rigorous intellectual standards and reached a broad, receptive audience of Americans. This interaction has been a powerful influence on my work.

Without a doubt, my work would not have been possible without the Endowments. My series on the Civil War, for instance, could not have been made without early and substantial support from the NEH, support which I have long ago repaid to the Endowment. The NEH provided one of the project's largest grants, thereby attracting a host of other funders. This rigorously earned imprimatur helped me to convince private foundations, corporations, and other public funders that my films were worthy of their support. NEH involvement helped me in every aspect of the production, and, through unrelated grants to other institutions, they helped restore the archival photographs we would use to tell our histories. Much of the seminal research our scholars provided also came from NEH-supported projects. And NEH's interest in our progress ensured at critical junctures that we did not stray into myth or hagiography. I am extremely grateful for all those things.

But above and beyond these facts, there is a larger argument to be made—one that is rooted in our nation's history. Since the beginning of this country, our government has been involved in

supporting the arts and the diffusion of knowledge, which was deemed as critical to our future as roads and dams and bridges. Early on, Thomas Jefferson and the other founding fathers knew that the pursuit of happiness did not mean a hedonistic search for pleasure in the marketplace of things, but an active involvement of the mind in the higher aspects of human endeavor--namely education, music, the arts, and history—a marketplace of ideas. Congress supported the journey of Lewis and Clark as much to explore the natural, biological, ethnographic, and cultural landscape of our expanding nation as to open up a new trading route to the Pacific. Congress supported numerous geographical, artistic, photographic, and biological expeditions to nearly every corner of the developing West. Congress funded, through the Farm Securities Administration, the work of Walker Evans and Dorothea Lange and other great photographers who captured for posterity the terrible human cost of the Depression and Dust Bowl—the latter a project I am working on that just received a grant from the NEH.

With Congress's great insight NEH was born and grew to its startlingly effective maturity echoing the same time-honored sense that our Government has an interest in helping to sponsor Communication, Art and Education, just as it sponsors Commerce. We are not talking about a 100% sponsorship, a free ride, but a priming of the pump, a way to get the juices flowing, a partnership between government and the private sector.

Which reminds me of a story. In the late 1980's, I was invited to a reception at the White House and had the great honor of meeting President Ronald Reagan. I told him I was a PBS producer working on a history of the Civil War. His eyes twinkled with a palpable delight as he recalled watching, as a young boy, the parades of ever-aging Union veterans marching down the main street of Dixon, Illinois on the Fourth of July. Then, in almost an admonishment, he spoke to me about the need, no, the responsibility he said for a private sector/governmental partnership when it came to public broadcasting and the humanities. (His administration was very supportive of these long-standing institutions.) I told him that nearly a third of my budget for the Civil War series came from a large American corporation, a third from private foundations, and a third from the National Endowment for

the Humanities, an agency then expertly led by Lynne Cheney, the wife of our former Vice-President. He smiled and then held me by the shoulders the way an affectionate uncle might do, and his eyes twinkled again. "Good work, he said. "I look forward to seeing your film."

These new proposals to de-fund CPB and the Endowments will literally put all of us out of business. Period. And somewhere, I imagine, it will erase that twinkle in Ronald Reagan's eyes.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

TESTIMONY OF  
EDWARD L. AYERS

PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR,  
ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENICES  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 14, 2011

Chairman Simpson, Ranking Member Moran, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the remarkable benefits of the National Endowment for the Humanities, which I have seen with my own eyes and in many forms. Back in 1985, when I was an assistant professor, the NEH awarded me \$11,500, a semester's leave. I left my wife and young son to drive 12,000 miles in a 400-dollar car to archives across the South, from one Motel 6 to the next, to write a history of the South in the three generations after the Civil War and Reconstruction. Seven years later, the resulting book became a finalist for the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize. The NEH stepped up again a few years later when there were no other people willing to support the crazy idea of scholarship on the brand-new World Wide Web. The project my colleagues and I built, "The Valley of the Shadow: Two Communities in the American Civil War," is still living on-line fifteen years later and has welcomed millions of users, from elementary school students to Harvard Graduate School, from the counties in Virginia and Pennsylvania where it was based, to China and Latin America. I was able to use that archive to write a book that won the Bancroft Prize.

I am now working with a project at the University of Richmond where we are trying to glimpse something we have never been able to see before—the complex, swirling patterns of emancipation among the four million people who became free in the American Civil War—with the NEH funding the undergraduate students who are doing the time-consuming work. This is a thrilling prospect as we approach the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of American slavery. The NEH has made possible a new kind of radio show, "BackStory, with the American History Guys," that brings together three historians, many callers, and fascinating interviews with Americans of all kinds of backgrounds, to living issues of today; it has appeared on over 200 stations, from Maine to California to Texas, with shows on the history of everything from federalism to courtship. And, finally, I am working with the NEH and the American Library Association to produce an anthology about the Civil War and Emancipation on the anniversaries of those two momentous events, providing the basis for five weeks of discussion at libraries of every kind across the entire nation. None of these things, I know from personal experience, would be possible, or even imaginable, without the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Given this knowledge of the essential role of the NEH, I was honored in 2000 to be invited to serve on the National Council for the Humanities, the board that oversees the work of the NEH. Over the five years I worked on the Council, I read hundreds of proposals, for everything from teachers' institutes and scholarly editions of the Founding Fathers to museum installations and television shows. The amount of imagination, creativity, and good will in those proposals was

both heartening and heart-breaking, for the NEH could support only a relatively small proportion. Whether based in a reservation in the West or a challenged school in the East, a community in my native Appalachia or in the cities of the Midwest, these projects provided people new ways to see the world, the nation, and themselves.

Like our major scientific agencies, the NEH uses a remarkably rigorous process to select the winning proposals. The proposals themselves are works of scholarship, requiring an accessible narrative, a thorough command of the literature, a compelling case for the impact they hope to make, and a rigorous budget. The proposals run to dozens of pages and are accompanied by letters of support from scholars and other allies. Panels of anonymous expert peer referees, chosen from institutions across the country and working as volunteers, review the proposals in particular categories, write brief statements regarding each, and assign an evaluation. After the panels have done their work, meeting together for many hours of discussion, the Council reviews them all, questioning staff about those that were chosen and those that were not, and then makes recommendations to the Chairman. Many eyes, in other words, examine every proposal to ensure that the resources of the NEH support projects that best serve the American public.

The NEH works in a remarkable way, for it leverages local initiative, local curiosity, and local investment. The multiplier effect is impressive, as the NEH works with state humanities councils to encourage collaboration among communities, to connect colleges, libraries, historical societies, and museums with one another and with the citizens who live around them. The NEH is a catalyst for the imagination and investment for people throughout the United States; it touches every kind of American community and every kind of American. The staff of the NEH stretches its dollars as far as they can be stretched, to wonderful effect.

The United States invented the modern concept of the humanities in our colleges and universities about a century ago. From the beginning, those humanities were meant to be useful rather than ornamental. From the beginning, the shapers of the new disciplines asked how history and literature could help foster democracy, how they could connect with the broad range of American people. The NEH builds on that great tradition, leveraging generations of investment to build one of the great humanistic enterprises in the world today.

The United States faces great challenges, including those of budgets, and we all understand the need to examine how all those resource are used. Those of us in the humanities do not ask for a very large portion of the nation's support. But we do ask that you help sustain one of the best investments our country has ever made: in the past, present, and future understanding of who we are and where we live in the world.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify before you today.

March 26, 2011

*Azar Nafisi, Executive Director of Cultural Conversations and Visiting Scholar, the Johns Hopkins Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, is the author of "Reading Lolita in Tehran." Her bestselling book has been translated into 32 languages and won diverse literary awards.*

**I respectfully present this testimony on behalf of the National Endowment for the Humanities, which has submitted to the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies an overall 2012 budget request for \$146,255,000.00.**

**I believe I have an almost unique understanding of the value of the humanities – why they are essential to human freedom, and why they deserve the support of the American people. That is because I have lived in a society where education in the humanities was banned, and I know what happens to democracy and freedom when that occurs. After the rigged Iranian presidential elections in 2009, the Islamic regime attacked the humanities as one of the main sources of protests, the most effective tool used by the West, especially America, to corrupt and incite Iranian youth. They threatened to close down all the humanities departments in Iran's universities.**

**It's no surprise that it was the humanities that came under attack. Great works of art, literature and philosophy that are the foundation of the humanities, pose a threat to tyranny because they encourage open thought, imagination, the questioning of preconceived notions and established authority. No amount of moral preaching or political correctness can replace what the imagination gives us when it places us in other people's experiences, opening our eyes to vistas and views we never knew existed.**

**I have written about how Nabokov's *Lolita* and other great books came to mean something in Iran, a country defined by its own literary masters: Hafiz, Rumi, Khayam, Ferdowsi. I would like to share with you how, through my experiences, I came to see ways through which imagination and thought connect different cultures and nationalities, how Tehran can be linked to Washington. I would also like to show why I believe that the desire to foster imagination and thought is as essential to the creation and preservation of a democratic society as it is dangerous and threatening to the existence of a totalitarian system.**

**I have to thank the Islamist regime for making me realize how fragile were the rights and values I had come to take for granted. Suddenly a new regime had established itself, taking hold of my country, my religion, my traditions, and claiming that the way I looked, the way I acted --what I believed in and desired as a human being, as a woman, a writer and teacher --were all alien.**

**The main targets of the new regime were anything that indicated difference and diversity. Among its first victims was religion itself which was confiscated, reduced and used as an ideology to gain and maintain political power. The regime claimed that the**

Sharia laws it was imposing on Iranian society were justified in that they were restoring a woman's dignity and rescuing her from degrading and dangerous Western ideas. The war on women's rights, minorities, human rights and culture became central to the fight against the "Western conspiracy."

By 1979, at the time of the revolution, women were active in all areas of life in Iran. The number of female candidates for universities had risen sevenfold during the first half of the 1970s. Women were scholars, police officers, mayors, judges, pilots and engineers --active in every field except the clergy. Iran had women in houses of Parliament and two women ministers: for higher education and women's affairs. The majority of Iranians had come to the streets desiring more rights, never dreaming they would be told to give up rights they already had. And for a long time during that revolution, Iranian women poured into the streets of Tehran, protesting the implementation of the new laws, one of their main slogans was, "Freedom is neither Western nor Eastern, freedom is global."

Other freedoms were gradually curtailed. We witnessed attacks on freedom of the press; the censorship of books; a ban on dancing, on female singers, on most forms of music, on films and other forms of art, followed by systematic attacks against intellectuals and the academia who protested these forms of oppression. Ayatollah Khomeini, citing the universities as the source of all "disasters of humanity," declared that they were more dangerous than bombs. Alongside of censorship of Iranian authors and films, Ophelia was cut from most scenes in *Hamlet*. Olive Oyl was excised from "Popeye."

The result was that ordinary Iranian citizens --men and women alike --began to feel the state in their private, daily affairs. People were flogged and jailed for wearing nail polish, Reebok shoes, lipstick. The fatwa against Salman Rushdie was precisely aimed against the dangers of imagination. The message was that totalitarian mindsets, no matter in what part of the world, cannot tolerate any form of irony, ambiguity or irreverence. As Carlos Fuentes declared, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini had issued a fatwa not just against one writer but against the democratic form of the novel, which frames a multiplicity of voices, opposing perspectives, active dialogue. What more dangerous subversion can there be than this democracy of voices? Ayatollah Khomeini was right about the universities he viewed as seats of Western culture—they were more dangerous than bombs.

For over thirty years the Iranian people resisted the assaults of the Islamic regime. And the most contentious area where this struggle was articulated was in the domain of thought and imagination. Ironically, many among the ardent revolutionaries have now come full circle, and some who once held the highest offices in the country have joined the peoples' struggle and are now called agents of the West. Today, former revolutionaries are among those who speak of and go to jail in defense of democracy and freedom of expression.

The way we in Iran connected to the rest of the world, especially America, was through their golden ambassadors, their literature, arts and music. In the fall of 1979, I was teaching two great American works, *Huckleberry Finn* and *The Great Gatsby*, at the University of Tehran while ironically, in the yard below, Islamists were shouting "Death

to America!" and that, a few streets away, the U.S. embassy was under siege by a group claiming to be following the path of the Imam. The new regime was leading a bloody crusade seemingly against Western imperialism, but in reality against its own people, against the rights of women and minorities, against cultural and individual freedom.

I have often asked myself: How is it that under the worst political and social conditions, during war and revolution, in jails and in concentration camps, most victims turn toward works of imagination? I remember, almost two decades ago, listening to a former student, who was newly released from jail, telling me that she and one of her cellmates, another former student, kept their spirits up by exchanging stories about their class discussions, about the books they read, about Henry James and F. Scott Fitzgerald. We know that fiction does not save us from torture or the brutality of tyrannical regimes, or from the banalities and cruelties of life itself. But we do know that, when confronted by utter degradation, by confiscation of all that gives life its individual worth and integrity, many instinctively go to the highest achievements of mankind, to works that appeal to our sense of beauty, memory, harmony --those that celebrate what is humane, those that we consider original works of the imagination.

You might say that such works gain added significance in a country deprived of its basic freedoms, but they do not matter much here, not in a free and democratic country. How relevant are Fitzgerald, Baldwin, Hurston, Twain and Emily Dickinson you might ask, to our lives in Washington, D.C.?

I believe that no freedom political, economic or social can be realized without the freedom of imagination and thought. It is this basic and most human form of freedom that both promises and safeguards all those other freedoms. Because of this a democratic government is not only the guardian of people's political, social and economic rights, but also is the representative of the nation's intellectual, spiritual and scientific legacies.

Like millions of others I came to this country because I believed it was founded on a dream, on the courage to imagine and to actualize what was imagined, whether it was the revolutionary war for independence, the struggle for the Constitution, or the war against slavery and later the civil rights movement and women's rights movement. And I wanted my children and their children to live in a country that safeguards such values, where empathy and curiosity — the two basic features of both Humanities and Sciences —will teach them how to live as citizens as well as citizens of the world, how to preserve the best that their country of birth, Iran had given them with the best that their new country had to offer. And because the Islamic regime and the resistance of the Iranian people has taught me that the most potent weapon against tyranny is not military might but a culture of democracy.

Everywhere I turn in this city is a testament to this claim. The three monuments to the three presidents of the United States, Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln are reminders of how the leaders of this country identified being American with Humanism, thereby creating a legacy that could challenge and go beyond their own flaws and prejudices and those of their times. Washington believed that to be enlightened was to be "a citizen of the

great republic of humanity at large.” As a symbol of the new American nation he wanted to build a National University in the Capital. The ideals Jefferson cherished in the Declaration of Independence are embodied in the Library of Congress, for he believed not only that Universities are our sanctuaries, but boasted that “ours are the only farmers who read Homer.” And Lincoln combined his dream of justice with a poetic language that resonates with the language of Shakespeare and the Bible. It was on the steps of the Lincoln memorial that the reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. revived that dream and that language, giving his life so that the dream can be turned into reality.

NEH represents these ideals, reminding us that imagination and thought like human rights and freedom transcend the boundaries of nationality, ethnicity, religion, race and gender, creating a common space where we celebrate and respect not just our differences but our shared and common humanity. What more suitable representation of a people who came to this land from all parts of the world, bringing with them the customs and cultures of their countries of birth, hoping to create a home that can embody them all?

This is the reason that I am proud to represent and be represented by the National Endowment for Humanities. In supporting and being a part of it, I participate in the living legacy of this country’s best and most enduring achievements, those that give America, a sense of unity and meaning, as well as pride. I sincerely believe in the work of NEH especially at this time of crisis and doubt, in its attempts to create a sense of community and pride through programs such as One Book, One City, or History Day, reaching out to different strata of the American people, creating for them a sense of community, enabling them to connect to their historical past, articulate their present and foresee the potentials for their future.

NEH has not only brought this sense of community and genuine pride to the American people in this time of crisis and change in this country and the world, but has been an effective vehicle in acquainting the Americans with the best that cultures around the world have to offer. I know all this through firsthand experience as a board member of Maryland Humanities Council, as a speaker and participant in the National Federation of State Humanities Councils’ annual conference, and most recently as a participant in NEH’s project through the libraries to present history, traditions and cultures of Muslim majority countries.

The humanities are essential to us in a very pragmatic sense, because they remind us of our shared human struggle, and allow us to deeply appreciate the voices and the hearts of others who are different from us, who exist in times and places we can only imagine. Democracy depends on that imagination. The work of the National Endowment for the Humanities is vital because it keeps open the channels of debate, questioning, and curiosity – the humanities keep alive what we might call the democratic imagination. Now more than ever, it is important for Americans to focus on our nation’s poetry and soul, to be reminded of this country’s great cultural heritage. I urge you to accept the 2012 budget request for the National Endowment for the Humanities, to enable this agency’s vital work to continue. Thank you.

April 8, 2011

To: Interior and Environment Appropriations

From: Mark Hofflund, Managing Director, Idaho Shakespeare Festival; Chair, Idaho Commission on the Arts; Board Member, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

Re: Testimony for Thursday, April 14, 2011, 10:30AM

Chairman Simpson, Ranking Member Moran, Members of the Subcommittee: Good morning. I wish to testify about the National Endowment for the Arts; and to share a story made possible by each of you – and your colleagues who have preceded you on this panel for nearly 50 years.

This is an Idaho story, coming from a place whose geography and culture begin in the Great Basin and run north along the western slopes of the Rockies; a place little known and perhaps best described in the words of Shakespeare, as undiscovered country.

Our 43<sup>rd</sup> state, formed as a territory by Abraham Lincoln in 1863 and brought into the Union in 1890, has provided me many privileges, including not only moments with the Chairman of this panel, but two decades of public service. ...volunteer public service, at city, state and federal levels, as an arts professional.

Without doubt mine is like many stories found in your districts; unique to me only in its particulars. Like many, I had never met a public official nor aspired to public service, before moving to the Second District of Idaho in 1993. I grew up among a generation for whom public service no longer was required. The draft was over and military registration discontinued. I came to Idaho with little appreciation even for the public education received as a child growing up in one of America's largest and finest cities – learning the pledge of allegiance (at Hans Christian Andersen and Marie Curie Elementary Schools), singing the national anthem, God Bless America and America the Beautiful, and memorizing the names of the 50 state capitals, with little knowledge or insight into the particulars of their geographies and cultures.

Happily, I was descended from immigrants who had participated in public service: my mother holding dual citizenship and federal employment in the 1950s; and my father, who – as the grandson of an immigrant (and Civil War veteran) and the son of a WWI pilot (and civil servant with the Bureau of Mines during WWII) – became, himself, a naval officer during the Korean War and served in the Reserves while I was growing up. And, happily for me, my opportunity for federal service ultimately would come, too, when the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts paid a visit to Idaho. Admittedly not a common occurrence; but neither did it require extraordinary means, as it would have for earlier generations of Americans. Federal transportation and infrastructure had been reaching into Idaho since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century – as The Oregon Trail was followed by the postal service and the railroads, and then the utilities, water

projects, highways, and air traffic – bringing with them local and federal commerce. Over less than 200 years, integrated systems of public infrastructure brought promise and prosperity to Idaho while simultaneously creating one of the most robust nations known to history. Less than a decade earlier in the 1990s, federal systems had delivered an NEA Chairman to Idaho, one who had agreed to leave a flourishing artistic career to help a struggling federal agency evolve once again into a trusted and valued deliverer of public good. Why did Jane Alexander come to Idaho? Heading the NEA from 1993 – 1997, she chose to engage the American public in ways her predecessors had yet to attempt. This included visiting all 50 states, and working broadly with those in the Administration and in Congress to preserve and renew the nation's *first ongoing infrastructure for the arts*.

Not that the arts were ever foreign to the nation's citizenry, nor to the nation's founders, the nation's capital, and the nation's statehouses. One might argue that things of beauty, things of culture, things of science, art, and imagination were so ingrained in the thinking of federal and state founders that a mere reference to "the pursuit of happiness" served unanimously to cover such a common appreciation, right after reference to "life" and "liberty" – and perhaps in ascending order. Then again, imagine, for a moment, what it might have been like to sign such a declaration of independence, wage a war to make it real, and spend 12 arduous years before ratifying a constitution and electing a president. It may have been remarkable for the Founders to have left a few *thoughts* on the arts as they poured resources into forming a federalist *government*, housed as soon as possible in *architecture* worthy of republican cultural ambitions in a city reflective of their democratic values. A city located not among one of the more powerful of its constituent states; not in the state of New York, or Massachusetts, or the Carolinas. Or any others. But rather in its own rural district, largely characterized by swamplands many would just as soon not even visit. Perhaps, for the Founders, the creation of public institutions like the Library of Congress – so infinitely more than a repository of books for lawmakers – perhaps this and other cultural accomplishments were sufficient unto the day. As for George Washington, his *words* would ring true across centuries, as inspiration for a federal arts infrastructure one day that would reach beyond the city bearing his name: "The arts and sciences are essential to the prosperity of the state and to the ornament and happiness of human life. They have a primary claim to the encouragement of every lover of his country and mankind." In the estimation of our founding president, who did everything to encourage the citizenry's love of their nation, the arts had a primary place in that encouragement – a place not only in forming the country, but also in engaging the love of humanity beyond its borders. For just such reasons, the history of the United States is replete with public investments in art and architecture – to a point when another great General, who had led us through WWII, signed legislation as President creating the National Cultural Center Act – his cultural leadership commemorated in the naming of the Kennedy Center's Eisenhower Theater.

Closing in on the 1960s, and a nation verging on civil unrest not seen in 100 years, President Johnson created and President Nixon built the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. With cities smoldering, leaders being assassinated, college students rioting (some getting killed by the public servants meant to protect them), the Cold War seeming like a scary misnomer – despite all this, Broadway producer Roger Stevens *founded* and its second chairman Nancy Hanks *grew* the NEA in both reputation and funding – from \$9 million when Hanks started in 1970 to \$99.9 million when she left in 1977 – and turned a tiny federal program into a policy leader in the arts, ever mindful that “in dollar comparisons to our national needs for defense, for poverty programs, for health, for welfare, or for education, the requirements for the arts are miniscule,” as she wrote in 1968.

The seeds of a future federal/state arts infrastructure were further sown in 1971, when 55 state and territorial arts agencies began to receive annual Basic State Grants from the NEA; and when state legislatures would use this incentive to more than double the funding and steer not only new cultural opportunities, but greater decision-making, to regional and local levels. President Carter, Chairman Biddle and Congress then expanded the idea of federal funding in every state with 12 regional “reps” serving the country; and expanded the notion of a federal relationship to Americans practicing the arts, by developing a national program called the National Heritage Awards, partnering with the National Council for the Traditional Arts founded in 1933. President Reagan, Chairman Hodson and Congress then established the NEA Jazz Masters, the National Medal of Arts, the Mayor’s Institute on City Design, the National Task Force on Presenting and Touring the Performing Arts, and a groundbreaking study on arts education called *Toward Civilization*. As Reagan said at a National Medals ceremony, “We honor the arts not because we want monuments to our own civilization but because we are a free people. The arts are among our nation’s finest creations and the reflection of freedom’s light.”

It was with this history that three succeeding Presidents, their NEA leaders, and key Members of Congress navigated the most perilous of times for the NEA, and emerged in all three cases with rising arts budgets and increased federalism. Not only would Jane Alexander visit all 50 states; but not long thereafter, Chairman Dana Gioia would spend as much time traveling domestically and abroad as he spent in his office at the historic Nancy Hanks/Old Post Office Building (so named by President Reagan), each year modestly stabilizing and increasing the NEA budget during the administration of George W. Bush and with growing support from Congress. As Bush and Gioia left office, not only was Congress funding the NEA at greater levels and with stronger Congressional support, but many of its opponents had begun to change their minds about the agency; and even those who still presented political opposition were no longer tendering legislation aimed at its demise. The NEA increasingly had proven its value across party lines, fulfilling the original hopes not only of its founding Presidents, Kennedy and Johnson, but also of President Nixon who saw the agency as an antidote to the harsh divisions

that were rending Americans apart. With no political benefit of his own to gain, Nixon had put the agency on its feet and supported the Arts as eminently good both for citizens throughout the country as well as for the federal body politic. Much the same could be said now thirty years later, as Gioia worked not only with the President and First Lady, and not only with Congress, but throughout federal and state government to catalyze the development of artistic excellence and accessibility for millions of younger Americans, thousands of educators, scores of journalists, members of the military and their families, towns and cities across America in which libraries, newspapers, public officials, schools, civic organizations, businesses and a broad section of citizen-volunteers collaborated (through a program called The Big Read) to reverse a three-decade decline in American literary participation. With no agenda at all, except one of essential equality and fairness, Gioia even sought out partnerships with cultural organizations in Congressional districts that had never received direct NEA support, considering it a failure of public infrastructure not to find worthy partners in all 435 districts and a failure of imagination to suppose there to be any group of 700,000 Americans not able to engage in artistic and cultural activities worthy of inspiring greater community appreciation, creativity and excellence.

Ultimately, the NEA is about public engagement along the broadest and most meaningful lines possible. It is about how we as a people recognize, honor and thereby build our cultural heritage. It does not *enforce* public values nor *entitle* public goods. It is a rare public infrastructure for which "cost" may be an object, but is not a specific requirement. The more we can provide, the better we all become. In the hands of good public servants from all walks of life, it functions like the Biblical talents that, when not buried, can be used to return manifold wealth, prosperity and economic growth. Not only do we *imagine* it can transcend politics, we have seen it *do* so. Having nearly lost it, during the culture wars, President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush made sure we used bipartisanship to bring it back. It is no longer about Democrats, Republicans, Independents, Tea Partiers, Libertarians, or any other vein past-or-yet-to-come in the political spectrum; it is about how all of us, of all faiths, backgrounds and politics, best practice federalism. It returns us to the roots of our founders, who during extended and unique moments late in the 1700s and into the 1800s, and then again through civil and world wars, created a system of government that relied on collective, cooperative, collaborative self-government. We are amid such defining times today. The marks of our success will be seen in how we separate federal chaff from federal wheat, and thereby fill the storehouse for future generations not with federal deficit but with federal bounty. I would humbly submit that the NEA is an agency of federal bounty; and that with continued level funding (specifically \$167.5 million), people not only from Idaho but from all over America will help you fill this storehouse.

MH

TESTIMONY OF ELENA DALY, VICE-PRESIDENT FOR DC AFFAIRS,  
PUBLIC LANDS FOUNDATION  
THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT  
AND RELATED AGENCIES; COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS;  
ATTENTION: OUTSIDE WITNESS TESTIMONY  
FISCAL YEAR 2012 BUDGET- BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

April 14, 2011

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

We thank you for this opportunity to present your committee with our views regarding the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) budget request for FY 2012. As a national, non-profit organization comprised principally of retired, but still dedicated, BLM employees, the Public Lands Foundation (PLF) has a unique body of experience, expertise and knowledge of public land management. As retirees, we believe we offer an objective and non-bureaucratic view of what is currently happening on the National System of Public Lands (NSPL). The PLF supports the BLM and its programs, but we are independent in our views and requests. We strive to improve the effectiveness of the BLM by encouraging 1) professionalism of its employees, 2) increasing public understanding, and 3) proper scientific management of lands administered by the BLM.

Overview

Some of the most significant management challenges for the BLM stem from rapid population and urban growth in the West and accompanying increased demands for access and use of the NSPL. The BLM's customers are as diverse as the natural resources the Bureau manages.

The public lands provide the Nation with opportunities for expanding the development of renewable energy as well as traditional needs for oil, natural gas, coal, non-energy minerals, grazing land and timber. Recreation, wildlife, wild horses, cultural resources and special places are significant attributes of those lands as well.

Management activities contribute to the vitality of State and local economies, generating an expected \$4.5 billion in revenues for 2012, mostly from energy development.

## Budget Overview

The PLF recognizes the reality of funding constraints and the need to reduce the Nation's budget deficit. In that light, PLF is pleased with several aspects of the overall budget request for the BLM. In particular we are pleased to see increases in two important areas, the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) and the processes associated with the restoration of abandoned mine lands (AML).

The NLCS is unique and comprised of incredible landscapes, designated for their outstanding cultural, ecological and scientific values. These areas range from red-rock deserts, rocky coasts and deep river canyons to high mountains and arctic tundra. Management of the NLCS has long been underfunded.

We believe the AML fee combined with the proposed budget increase will provide a process to begin reclaiming both the safety and environmental hazards that remain after over 150 years of hard-rock mining on millions of acres in the West.

We are also pleased to see increases for land acquisition, renewable energy, the Secretary's Cooperative Landscape Conservation initiative, and Youth in the Great Outdoors. We support the budget proposals to recoup the costs of inspection and enforcement activities for mineral leases from new fees. We are also pleased to see the Secretary's proposal to eliminate the sunset date for the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA) and to allow lands identified in newer BLM land use plans as suitable for disposal to be sold using FLTFA authority.

However, we have a number of concerns with other parts of this budget proposal.

## Land Use Planning

Planning is the foundation upon which all BLM management decisions are built. Without up to date plans, the basis for making decisions is inadequate, a major factor contributing to increasing litigation of BLM decisions.

The reduction of \$8.2 million for land use planning will have lasting impact on future decisions on public lands administered by the BLM. Designed to last for 15 to 20 years, new or revised land use plans will be few and far between. The primary tool the BLM has to affect long term change on public lands is land use planning, thus the Administration is giving up a significant opportunity to improve management direction and future decisions for units of the NLCS and other areas of the NSPL.

#### Alaska Conveyance

The reduction of \$17 million from the Alaska Conveyance Program will be devastating to the BLM in Alaska and the U.S. Government's commitment to the State of Alaska, the Native Corporations and individual native allottees to transfer lands that have been promised to them for over 40 years. This would be roughly a 20 percent reduction in land transfer capability and will result in reductions in force and the loss of many 638 Survey Contracts for many small villages in Alaska.

#### Wild Horses and Burros

While we are pleased that the Administration has requested sufficient funds to support efforts for this controversial program, we remain dismayed at the seemingly unsolvable issues that continue to haunt efforts to maintain healthy horses on healthy ranges. Congress must step in at some point to write more effective legislation and provide specific guidance, particularly to resolve the issue of spending many millions of dollars maintaining unadoptable wild horses. It can't continue in this manner much longer!

Mr. Chairman, we hope these comments and concerns assist you in budget deliberations for the FY 2012 budget for the BLM. We remain sincere in our efforts to assure proper management of the National System of Public Lands.

/S/

Henri R. Bisson, President  
Public Lands Foundation  
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TESTIMONY OF BRADY ROBINSON, ACCESS FUND AND OUTDOOR ALLIANCE  
 UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
 COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR,  
 ENVIRONMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES  
 PUBLIC WITNESS HEARING, APRIL 14, 2011

**Executive Summary of Outdoor Alliance’s FY2012 Budget Recommendations:**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Program and Funding Recommendations</b>
Dept. of Agriculture Forest Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Management Planning/Assessment/Monitoring: \$205 million</li> <li>• Recreation Management, Heritage and Wilderness: \$290 million</li> <li>• Capital Improvements &amp; Maintenance/Trails: \$349 million</li> <li>• Integrated Resource Restoration: \$854 million</li> </ul>
Dept. of the Interior National Park Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Park Operations: \$2.3 billion</li> <li>• National Recreation and Preservation: \$51.5 million</li> <li>• Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program: \$10 million</li> </ul>
Dept. of the Interior Bureau of Land Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation Management: \$77 million</li> <li>• National Landscape Conservation System: \$39.3 million</li> </ul>
DOI and USDA Jointly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal LWCF: \$900 million (including)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stateside: \$200 million</li> <li>Forest Legacy Program: \$59 million</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Wild and Scenic Rivers:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BLM: \$9.3 million; USFS: \$19 million; NPS \$1 million</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee:

My name is Brady Robinson and I serve as the Executive Director of the Access Fund, a national non-profit organization dedicated to climbing and mountaineering access and conservation. The Access Fund is a founding member of the Outdoor Alliance (OA), a coalition of six national, member-based organizations devoted to conservation and stewardship of our nation’s public lands and waters through responsible human-powered outdoor recreation. OA includes: Access Fund, American Canoe Association, American Hiking Society, American Whitewater, International Mountain Bicycling Association, and Winter Wildlands Alliance, and represents the interests of millions Americans who hike, paddle, climb, mountain bike, ski and snow shoe on our nation’s public lands and waters. Our collective direct membership is over 100,000, and we have a network of almost 1,400 local clubs covering every state in the country.

The Outdoor Alliance has extensive experience working with federal land managers across the country concerning recreation and conservation policies. Our experience shows that adequate funding for the National Park Service, US Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management is required to support public access and enjoyment of the cherished public lands and rivers they manage. While federal land managers are integrating recreation, conservation, and restoration programs to more efficiently and effectively manage our public lands for the benefit of all Americans, it is also clear that budget cuts to these agencies would mean less access to and conservation of our public land. Under-funded and under-staffed land managers, when forced to

make resource protection and visitor use decisions, are much more likely to close or highly restrict public access. This problem concerns Outdoor Alliance activities but also hunters and anglers. My organization, the Access Fund, has seen this dynamic at numerous locations across the country such as Williamson Rock in the Angeles National Forest, Christmas Tree Pass at the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, and at Castle Rocks in Idaho's BLM Burley Field Office. The Outdoor Alliance believes that with the guidance and momentum of the America's Great Outdoors initiative the agencies are poised—if given adequate resources—to enhance public enjoyment of high quality public lands and waters like never before.

The Outdoor Alliance supports a common sense budget approach that will adequately fund Department of the Interior and Department of Agriculture activities that are essential to providing public recreation access to high quality public lands and waters. These activities support the \$730 billion annual outdoor recreation economy and are critical in reconnecting our youth and our increasingly diverse citizenry with nature. To achieve these goals, we offer the following budget recommendations for Fiscal Year 2012.

### **Department of Agriculture - Forest Service**

Recreation on national forest lands greatly supports local economies and employment. The 2010 National Visitor Use Monitoring Report found that spending by recreation visitors in areas near national forests totals almost \$13 billion annually. Protecting these economic benefits requires an adequately funded planning process, an effective infrastructure of trails and roads, and protected natural landscapes and rivers. Forest Service land management plans (with appropriate inventory and monitoring efforts) are critical to respond to existing and developing management challenges, and to inform intelligent and strategic forest management that allows for responsible recreational access. Forest plans must be maintained and revised repeatedly to maintain relevancy, and updated inventory and monitoring data is critical for present-day planning and management challenges. In the last eight years funding for Forest Service planning has dropped by over one-third, and we've seen associated unmet issues and obligations that have led directly to restrictions of various OA activities. To maintain a basic planning program that is able to respond to today's management challenges, OA requests at least the Administration's requested budget of \$205 million for **Land Management Planning, Assessment & Monitoring**.

The **Recreation, Heritage and Wilderness** program oversees all recreation on National Forest lands, and yet this program is also chronically under-funded and understaffed. OA supports at least the President's allocation of \$290 million that will permit the Forest Service to prioritize resources and facilities, maintain current on-the-ground staff, and continue basic recreation resource analyses and planning. Additionally, this funding level will assist in leveraging partnerships with the human-powered recreation community, who devote many thousands of volunteer hours to conservation and stewardship projects on our national forests.

The National Forest System serves over 50 million visitors annually who participate in activities such as cross-country skiing, hiking, climbing, boating, and mountain biking across. Over 153,000 miles of trails support these activities, but the Forest Service struggles with maintenance backlogs in the billions of dollars. OA believes that \$349.9 million in FY12 for **Capital Improvements and Maintenance** is the basic support needed to avoid adding to the

massive deferred maintenance backlog, improve non-motorized trail infrastructure, mitigate resource impacts, and provide high-quality recreational experiences on Forest Service lands.

Our national forests are interspersed with old roads that receive little or no use yet cause serious environmental impacts and pose long-term financial threats. Removing old and unused roads and investing in the roads used by hikers, climbers, anglers, hunters, bicyclists, and boaters is good for recreation, good for the environment, creates jobs, and improves water quality benefitting downstream users. Since its creation in 2007, the **Legacy Roads and Trails Remediation Fund** has improved over 12,000 acres of watershed, maintained 3,170 miles of trails, improved 10,959 miles of authorized roads, and decommissioned 2,970 miles of unauthorized roads. The Legacy Roads initiative creates or retains approximately 1,500 jobs every year which provide a significant economic stimulus to rural America. OA supports FY12 appropriation of \$854 million for the **Integrated Resource Restoration** budget line for the restoration and management of priority watersheds, with at least \$75 million of that allocated to continue the important work of the Legacy Roads and Trails program.

### **Department of the Interior - National Park Service**

Our national parks offer an array of world-class opportunities to recreate. Many of America's national parks serve as iconic locations for Outdoor Alliance activities, and enthusiasts travel from all over the world to climb, hike, boat, bike, and ski in places like Yosemite, Grand Canyon, and Grand Teton. OA supports the President's proposed FY12 appropriation of \$2.3 billion for the **Operation of the National Park System**, including \$51.5 million for **National Recreation and Preservation**. For over 20 years, the **Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA)** program has helped people build parks and trails and preserve open space and river corridors in their local communities. RTCA leverages federal funding by assisting locally-led conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the country to create important community infrastructure, encourage volunteerism and environmental stewardship, and connect families and children to close-to-home recreation opportunities. Further, RTCA helps reconnect Americans—especially kids—with the outdoors as part of the America's Great Outdoors initiative. OA believes that an RTCA appropriation of \$10 million for FY12 would allow this essential capacity-building conservation and recreation program to continue.

### **Department of the Interior - Bureau of Land Management**

Many OA members recreate on BLM lands across the country. Opportunities to recreate on BLM lands—such as mountain biking in Utah and climbing in California—are considered some of the most highly-valued in the country. Outdoor Alliance agrees with the Administration that the BLM is uniquely positioned to contribute to the success of the America's Great Outdoors initiative and its goals of reconnecting Americans to these superlative recreation resources and re-igniting the passions of the public for their outdoor legacy. We support a \$77 million FY12 budget for **Recreation Management** that will enable BLM to strengthen its protection and management of popular, high quality recreation areas.

The Outdoor Alliance has long valued the high-quality recreation opportunities found specifically within the BLM's **National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS)** which

represent some of the best human-powered recreation in the American West. Examples include: rock climbing at Red Rocks National Conservation Area in Nevada; mountain biking the Loop Road at Steens Mountain in Oregon; boating the Rogue Wild and Scenic River, also in Oregon; backcountry skiing at Gunnison Gorge NCA in Colorado; and hiking “the Wave” at Vermillion Cliffs National Monument in Utah. OA believes that funding of \$39.3 million for NLCS programs is necessary to hire essential management staff, monitor and protect natural and recreational resources, prevent resource damage, and allow for a quality visitor experience.

### **Department of the Interior and Department of Agriculture**

The **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** Act of 1965 directed Congress to allocate royalties from offshore oil and gas development for the purchase of land, waterways, wetlands, and other resource lands and to provide matching grant assistance for state and local projects. The LWCF also addresses the nation's growing desire to preserve natural areas, and provide the recreational opportunities enjoyed by the Outdoor Alliance membership. LWCF landscapes also offer significant environmental, economic and cultural benefits: clean drinking water and protected fisheries; protection from wildfires and flooding; tourism dollars in rural communities; and access to out-of-doors recreation opportunities.

In 1972 Congress authorized \$900 million to be used each year for LWCF projects out of more than \$6 billion in federal revenue collected annually from offshore oil and gas leases. However, federal budgets have historically fallen far short of the support needed for these important and popular projects. Yet, the LWCF has long enjoyed strong and bipartisan support. Last Congress the House of Representatives passed the CLEAR Act (H.R. 3534) which included a provision dedicating full funding of LWCF at \$900 million each year. Bipartisan Senate legislation (S.2747) also provided full and dedicated funding for the LWCF at the authorized level of \$900 million annually. Outdoor Alliance supports the President’s stated goal of fully funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund by 2014 and we request the subcommittee fund federal LWCF at \$900 million and stateside LWCF at \$200 million for FY12 to match State funds.

**Wild and Scenic Rivers** offer Americans some of the best outdoor recreation opportunities on federal lands and is a core component of the America’s Great Outdoors initiative. Explicitly funding Wild and Scenic River program staff and activities within each agency would ensure that agencies have the capacity to protect these rivers and provide world-class recreation opportunities. We support the Administration’s proposed \$9.3 million for the BLM Wild and Scenic River Program, request that a new line item for the Forest Service Wild and Scenic Rivers program be funded at \$19 million out of the Recreation Management, Heritage and Wilderness budget, and that the Wild and Scenic Rivers Program line item in the NPS budget be funded at no less than \$1 million to complement the Park Unit, Partnership Rivers, and Special Resource Studies budget lines.

\* \* \*

Thank you for considering these suggestions.



# Marine Conservation Biology Institute

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William Chandler, Vice President for Government Affairs

March 28, 2011

The Honorable Michael K. Simpson, Chair  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives, RHOB B-308  
Washington, DC 20515

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

Marine Conservation Biology Institute (MCBI), based in Bellevue, WA, is a nonprofit conservation organization whose mission is to protect vast areas of the ocean. We use science to identify places in peril and advocate for bountiful, healthy oceans for current and future generations. MCBI supports the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS) for the habitats it protects, particularly the monuments and refuges that conserve marine environments. I wish to thank the members of the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies for the opportunity to submit written testimony recommending \$9.03 million in FY 2012 for the management of the nation's marine monuments.

The USFWS NWRS oversees 553 refuges and 4 marine national monuments covering more than 234,000 square miles. A comprehensive analysis compiled by the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE), of which MCBI is a member, shows that the Refuge System needs at least \$900 million in annual operations and maintenance funding to properly administer its lands and waters, educational nature programs, habitat restoration projects, and much more. Of that \$900 million goal for the Refuge System, \$18 million is needed to provide sufficient management of the marine national monuments.

Four marine national monuments have been established in the Pacific Ocean since 2006: Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, Marianas Trench Marine National Monument, Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument, and Rose Atoll Marine National Monument. Together, these monuments protect approximately 335,348 square miles of marine habitat, of which the Service's jurisdiction from the Hawaii-Pacific Refuge Complex increased by 215,600 square miles. These four monuments include 12 marine refuges and more than 20 islands, atolls and reefs spread across the vast Pacific Ocean. President Bush gave the Department of the Interior (designated to the US Fish and Wildlife Service) management responsibility over the three newest monuments, although the Department of Commerce maintains primarily responsibility for managing fishing in the outer waters. In sum, USFWS responsibilities in the Pacific Islands have increased substantially, but the funding to manage these vast areas has not followed suit.

## **Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument**

Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument is managed collectively by the Department of the Interior, US Fish and Wildlife Service; the Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); and the State of Hawaii, Department of Land and Natural Resources. The monument is home to millions of seabirds, an incredible diversity of coral species including deep-sea corals, and the highly endangered Hawaiian monk seal.

Approximately 90% of Hawaii's green sea turtles nest in the monument, as do about 99% of the world's population of Laysan albatross and 98% of the black-footed albatross. These islands within the monument are also important to Native Hawaiians for culture, history, and religion.

#### **Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument**

The Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument contains some of the last remaining, relatively intact coral reef and pelagic ecosystems in the Pacific Ocean. Any one of the seven coral islands contains nearly four times as many shallow water, reef-building coral species as the entire Florida Keys. The monument provides habitat for an estimated 14 million seabirds and many threatened or endangered species such as leatherback, loggerhead, and green sea turtles; humphead wrasse; bumphead parrotfish; and the globally depleted giant clam. An estimated 200 seamounts, most of which have yet to be identified or explored, are predicted to exist in the pelagic zone within 200 nautical miles of these seven islands. Seamounts are important biodiversity hotspots because they provide habitat and localized nutrients in the vast pelagic waters of the Pacific.

#### **Rose Atoll Marine National Monument**

Rose Atoll Marine National Monument is home to a very diverse assemblage of terrestrial and marine species, many of which are threatened or endangered. Rose Atoll supports 97% of the seabird population of American Samoa, including 12 federally protected migratory seabirds and 5 species of federally protected shorebirds. Rose Atoll is the largest nesting ground in the Samoan Islands for threatened green sea turtles and is an important nesting ground for the endangered hawksbill turtle. Rose Atoll also provides sanctuary for the giant clam, whose population is severely depleted throughout the Pacific Ocean.

#### **Marianas Trench Marine National Monument**

The Marianas Trench Marine National Monument protects areas of biological, historical and scientific significance. The monument is home to unusual life forms found in its boiling and highly acid waters, highly diverse and unique coral reef systems (more than 300 species of stony coral), and an astonishingly high population of apex predators, including large numbers of sharks. It monument also encompasses the Mariana Trench, the deepest ocean area on Earth, deeper than Mount Everest is tall.

#### **Marine National Monument Management Implementation**

It is imperative that USFWS establish appropriate management measures to adequately protect the land, waters and seafloor of all four of these relatively pristine marine monuments. In particular, the USFWS must have adequate funds to continue to develop management plans for each monument, hire adequate management personnel, provide transportation to visit the islands on a regular basis, develop plans to restore damaged reefs and lands, and consult with NOAA and the US Coast Guard to provide proper surveillance and enforcement actions for all the monuments.

Restoration actions are needed at most of the islands, including restoring natural habitats, removing discarded equipment and structures from past military occupations, and dealing with old waste disposal sites. Additionally, human exploration and occupation has introduced many

invasive species to the islands, including various rodents, insects, and plants, which should be removed for the survival of the native species.

For example, two fishing vessels that grounded in the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument have yet to be removed and are currently devastating the surrounding coral ecosystems. In 1991, a 121-foot Taiwanese fishing boat sank on Palmyra Atoll; in 2007 an abandoned 85-foot fishing vessel was discovered on Kingman Reef. These two islands are home to coral reefs that are some of the most pristine in the world. The Palmyra wreck sits directly on the reef and continues to damage the ecosystem by leaching iron into the water which has accelerated the rapid growth of a nuisance corallimorph, *Rhodactis howesii*. According to the report by the US Geological Service and the University of Hawaii, greater than 100 million corallimorph individuals cover more than 247 acres of the bottom. The most recent expedition to the atoll shows that the corallimorph doubled coverage in one year (within 500 meters of the ship in 2007 to 1100 meters in 2008). Refuge managers recently reported that the corallimorph is continuing to spread out of control and the ship must be removed immediately to avoid further damage to the ecosystem.

The Kingman Reef wreck's initial grounding gouged the reef and has continued to cause physical and ecological damage. The area is showing early signs of the nuisance corallimorph, as well as an elevated growth of algae. The algae and the corallimorph become very abundant when stimulated by increases in limited nutrients, such as iron from corroding ship, and in time smother and kill the surrounding coral reefs. The algae are present on nearly 10% of the metal debris (metallic engine parts, piping, cookware, etc.). Both the algae and corallimorph are present within 200 meters of the abandoned shipwreck. As the ship continues to break apart, more steel will be scattered over the reef crest encouraging algae and corallimorph growth. If this growth continues unabated, it is expected to spread towards the north facing shoreline where more fragile coral gardens are located.

### **Appropriation Needs**

MCBI requests that the subcommittee increase funding for NWRS operations to \$9.03 million in FY 2012 to begin to properly manage and restore the four Pacific monuments. Of the approximately \$7.5 million that USFWS received in FY 2010 to manage Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, over half contributed to the maintenance and operation of Midway Atoll Airfield and upkeep of historic buildings, which is managed and funded jointly with the Federal Aviation Administration. The remaining USFWS funds were inadequate for monument resource management needs. For instance, USFWS does not currently have adequate funds to hire a biologist for the monument.

MCBI recommends a small increase of \$0.5 million to continue to co-manage Midway Atoll Airfield and more adequately manage the natural resources of the monument. The requested amount is in line with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's funding to co-manage the monument.

Furthermore, USFWS received less than \$200,000 in FY 2010 for management of the three new marine monuments. It has been over two years since the establishment of the newest monuments

and an increase of less than \$200,000 to manage these three extraordinary marine monuments is unacceptable. To properly manage and restore these monuments, the monuments at minimum need \$1.03 million to hire a manager to oversee each new monument (a Rose Atoll Manager was funded in FY 2010), one public planner position to aid in management responsibilities, and associated administrative costs such as office space costs and travel expenses. Additional funds would begin to address restoration measures to remove nuisance and invasive species that are impacting native wildlife populations. Funds will also fund an initial assessment for the removal of the two shipwrecks mentioned above that are damaging coral habitats.

In summary, the USFWS has not requested sufficient funds in FY 2012 to meet its stewardship responsibilities to manage the four marine national monuments and associated refuges.

MCBI respectfully recommends that the subcommittee appropriate a total of \$1.03 million to USFWS NWRS to protect and restore these marine conservation areas for current and future generations.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "WJ Chandler".

William Chandler

Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning. My name is Barbara King and I am a resident of Houston, Texas. I am testifying in opposition to continued funding for the Bureau of Land Management's Land Exchange program until land exchange regulations in 43 CFR Part 2200 are amended to better protect the private property rights of rural landowners. Over a decade and several critical GAO reports later, Congress is still revisiting, at taxpayers' expense, the same unresolved problems identified in GAO's June, 2000, report to Congressman George Miller, calling for expanded roles, responsibilities, and accountability of BLM's review team, now called the National Land Exchange Team.

I am not a lawyer or a lobbyist, but a citizen who learned about the BLM land exchange program during the process of regaining the national forest access and property value I lost in a Colorado land exchange four years ago. The experience would have been prevented had BLM officials interpreted their notification regulations as I believe the public would expect them to, and exercised what is called the Full Disclosure provision in their exchange agreement with the land exchange facilitator.

In a land exchange, BLM's initial public notification, the "Notice of Exchange Proposal," must be published once a week for 4 consecutive weeks in newspapers of general circulation and mailed to authorized users, jurisdictional State and local governments, and the congressional delegation, and others "as appropriate." The second notice, the Notice of Decision, reads similarly but adds "non-Federal exchange parties" and "individuals who requested notification" to the list. Your constituents would be surprised, as I was, that important land exchange decisions such as notification of the public are made quite arbitrarily by BLM realty personnel.

The notification regulations should be amended to add two groups of potentially affected people to the mailing list for these notices. The first group is adjacent landowners to BLM land up for disposal and the second group consists of prospective patentees and grantees of the Federal land, known to the land exchange facilitator.

I have asked countless BLM officials to explain how BLM defines the word "appropriate" in this regulation, and never received an answer. Most recently, Ms. Kim Berns, BLM Division Chief of Lands and Realty, told me that all my questions had been answered and she had nothing further to offer. Since this exchange occurred in former Congressman John Salazar's district, I thought he could help, but I was told he could not require an agency to do anything. So, two years later, I still don't know exactly what BLM means by the term, or why these two groups of people are not appropriate to notify. However, I have learned one thing. An individual citizen is not going to win a battle of semantics with the Department of Interior.

Unknown to the public, the acting DOI Inspector General, Mary Kendall, recently instructed BLM officials to specifically remove, from the next edition of the Land Exchange Handbook, its requirement to notify adjacent landowners, which has been on the Handbook's exchange processing checklist since 1997. This defies common sense. There is, however, a contingent at BLM that does think such notification is the right thing to do. The exchange Notice of Intent said BLM would notify adjacent landowners. The exchange Decision Summary stated, incorrectly, that it had, revealing the NLET's lack of oversight regarding the notification procedure. In addition, DOI officials testified before the Appropriations Committee in 2005, that BLM must notify adjacent landowners.

Next, I would like to comment on Secretary Salazar's recent response to this Committee's directive to him in HR 111-80 to reform the land exchange program based on the troubling 2009 Government Accountability report entitled "BLM and the Forest Service Have Improved Oversight of the Land Exchange Process, but Additional Actions are needed." BLM has re-issued, via Instruction Memoranda to Field Officers, policy already in the Handbook. Even if the content of these memos had been encouraging, apparently it wouldn't matter. A senior BLM official told me BLM considers the Handbook only a guide and no case law enforces it.

One memo reveals that Field and State realty officials may or may not have received formal training, are largely self-policing, and interpret statutes, regulations, and exchange policies with a supervisor "spot-checking" their work. This is contrary to GAO's recommendation that staff complete mandatory training.

Another memo reiterates the Full Disclosure requirement which has been in the Handbook since 1997. Simply reissuing this is meaningless without BLM's commitment to enforce it. As GAO states, it is imperative BLM realty staff do this.

My experience illustrates how crucial that provision is, for three reasons:

- 1.) BLM must know the content of a facilitator's agreements, the exchange parameters stated and the scope of work offered, to ensure consistency with BLM policies.
- 2.) BLM must add prospective patentees and grantees known to the facilitator to its mailing list. This makes sense according to the regulation, and is required by Handbook policy in Chapter 9.
- 3.) BLM must enter the names of both the prospective patentee and grantees on its appraisal request forms to submit to the appraiser so he is aware of its present use and economic factors such as all parties to the transaction.

The Secretary's response also rejects the Congressional directive to ensure that decisions regarding land exchanges are fully documented, leaving documentation of full disclosures at the authorized officer's discretion. Therefore, the exchange regulation should be amended so BLM's National Land Exchange Team must provide case file documentation of the disclosures. This is the GAO recommendation, and as Congressional members look at this issue more closely, I think they will agree it should be done, and the Team should be held accountable to Congress.

Finally, DOI's embedded philosophy of "delegating down," favoring a State-run land exchange program with little Headquarters oversight, can put top officials in the position of making inaccurate statements to Congress, based on unsubstantiated and biased information received from the field. This may be routine in Washington, but to the public outside the beltway, it is entirely unacceptable.

For example, responding to Congressman Culberson's requests for information, BLM Director Abbey stated that BLM had followed all regulations and policies in the exchange, when, among other things, BLM failed to exercise the Full Disclosure policy. The National Land Exchange Review Team had not verified disclosures, so it was only after the exchange BLM realized some of the exchange parameters did not square with BLM policy.

Instead of honoring BLM's galling request for increased funding for land exchanges, Congress should wait until Secretary Salazar implements the GAO recommendations and Congressional directives.

Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee, thank you again.



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**SAVING AMERICA'S MUSTANGS**

**Written Statement from Madeleine Pickens:**

As Congress works to finalize legislation for Fiscal Year 2012, Saving America's Mustangs would like to bring to your attention the significant cost savings that could be realized for American taxpayers through adjustments to spending in the Department of Interior/Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Wild Horse and Burro Program and the approval and adoption of our Wild Horse Eco-Sanctuary plan. We have been extremely frustrated with the lack of progress on the eco-sanctuary project that I have proposed for the last two and a half years even though I have taken every means necessary, including my own personal financial investments, in order to make this dream a reality for our wild horses.

We are recovering from an extreme economic downturn, the likes of which hasn't been seen since The Great Depression and the need for jobs in small communities is at an all-time high. The sanctuary that I have proposed could, when fully developed, provide up to 1,000 jobs and tourism at the site and in surrounding communities. There are community leaders in small towns in Elko County, including Wells, which are very anxious to see this project move forward so they can reap the benefits of those jobs and create a stimulated economy there. I have received countless letters of support from people all over the world and from members of Congress and the Senate.

Last year in a bi-partisan sign on letter, 54 members of the House of Representatives wrote in July 2010:

*"We remain concerned that (Wild Horse) roundups are conducted at great expense to the taxpayer. As we have pointed out in the past, BLM's aggressive use of roundups have resulted in unsustainable increases in the number of horses in holding facilities (now at 38,000) and continues to undermine the BLM's overall budget. Unfortunately, the frequency of roundups has only increased under this administration."*

Last year, the BLM encouraged me to purchase a ranch property and that would trigger moving forward with the sanctuary. I have purchased two ranches that include 18,500 of private land and more than 550,000 acres of public land that transfers with my property. I have been to extensive meetings with the BLM, including making plans to do water improvements and install fencing. We are in limbo now, and the BLM is continuing to remove and hold thousands of horses (including horses off of my property) at the cost to American taxpayers. With one of the largest budget crisis in decades, why are we continuing to allow such fiscally irresponsible behavior to continue?

With my sanctuary plan, the wild horses that we wish to take in the initial startup phase will be those currently in BLM's short-term holding facilities where they are being kept at an average cost of \$2,500 per year, per horse. We have proposed to the BLM that we will take these horses at the current long-term holding rate of \$475 per year, per horse. We have broken out the current costs of the BLM program with the savings if my proposal was accepted in the chart below:

<b>BLM Current Short-Term Holding Costs to Taxpayers:</b>				
<b># of Horses</b>	<b>Yr. Rate</b>	<b>Cost Per Yr.</b>	<b>10 Yr. Cost</b>	<b>15 Yr. Cost</b>
1,000	\$ 2,500	\$2,500,000	\$25,000,000	\$37,500,000
10,000	\$ 2,500	\$25,000,000	\$250,000,000	\$375,000,000
15,000	\$ 2,500	\$37,500,000	\$375,000,000	\$562,500,000
<b>Saving America's Mustangs Proposed Short-Term Holding Costs to Taxpayers:</b>				
<b># of Horses</b>	<b>Yr. Rate</b>	<b>Cost Per Yr.</b>	<b>10 Yr. Cost</b>	<b>15 Yr. Cost</b>
1,000	\$ 475	\$475,000	\$4,750,000	\$7,125,000
10,000	\$ 475	\$4,750,000	\$47,500,000	\$71,250,000
15,000	\$ 475	\$7,125,000	\$71,250,000	\$106,875,000
<b>Total Taxpayer Savings over 1, 10, &amp; 15 years with SAM Plan:</b>				
		<b>1 Yr. Savings</b>	<b>10 Yr. Savings</b>	<b>15 Yr. Savings</b>
<b><u>1,000 horses</u></b>		<b><u>\$2,025,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$20,250,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$30,375,000</u></b>
<b><u>10,000 horses</u></b>		<b><u>\$20,250,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$202,500,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$303,750,000</u></b>
<b><u>15,000 horses</u></b>		<b><u>\$30,375,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$303,750,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$455,625,000</u></b>

Anyone who doubts or suggests there is not a significant savings in this approach is simply ignoring the truth or refusing to do the math. I have also discussed in detail with the BLM about the possibility of purchasing more land so that at some point we will be able to take the entire 12,000 horses currently in short-term holding. Only when we have accomplished that goal can we truly say that we are solving the holding cost issue.

From its inception over two decades ago, the Wild Horse and Burro Program never operated toward the favorable management our wild horses. They have continued to gather horses at an alarming rate, spending millions of dollars on a broken program, and it's still rising. Is this the best our government can do for our American citizens and our icons: the wild horse? More importantly, is it *legally* consistent with the law that was passed to protect our wild horses in 1971? With that legislation it was passed that it was the policy of Congress that the wild free-roaming horses and burros be protected from capture, branding, harassment, or death; and that the areas in which they are presently found to be an integral part of the natural system of the public lands. It makes you ask yourself, what has now changed that we are letting this continue to an eventual point of extinction of this species?

The following was posted on the BLM's website on September 29, 2009:

*"In Fiscal Year 2008, holding costs exceeded \$27 million, accounting for three-fourths of the FY 2008 enacted funding level of \$36.2 million for the BLM's total wild horse and burro program. This level of funding is not sufficient to support necessary removals from the range while maintaining lifetime holding for older unadopted animals. To continue its current removal, holding, and restrictive sales practices, the BLM would need approximately **\$85 million in 2012.**"*

It's time to turn the corner on this flawed management direction and begin solving these problems now rather than continuing to add to the list of financial problems that the Bureau of Land Management

already has to be accountable for. Millions of Americans are watching and waiting for us to do the right thing and protect the remaining wild horses and to provide a humane and fiscally sound solution to this problem. I implore you to raise your voices and tell the BLM that the status quo is not acceptable. Our wild horses need change *today*, not five years from now. Five years is way too late to implement change in a program that does irreversible damage every day.

We respectfully request that the members of the Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations pass legislation that:

- Rejects BLM's \$12 million wild horse and burro budget increase request, unless language specifically prohibits expenditure of funds to remove more horses from the range.
- Suspends wild horse and burro roundups in all, but verifiable emergent situation.
- Prohibit the use of any funds to euthanize healthy horses or sell horses directly or indirectly for slaughter.
- Fund private/public partnerships offering sound solutions to the wild horse dilemma. Partnerships like Saving America's Mustangs' proposal offers taxpayers millions of dollars in savings and ensures a safe and humane future for our cherished wild horses.

The Honorable Dan Burton (IN-05)  
Statement on Interior Appropriations  
4.14.11

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Chairman Simpson, Ranking Member Moran and Members of the Committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity today to share with the Committee my concerns about the Bureau of Land Management's operation of the Wild Horse and Burro Program.

I would also like to thank Chairman Simpson and Ranking Member Moran for working with me to address this very issue during consideration of the "Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act" (H.R. 1). I believe our efforts to send a message to the Bureau of Land Management that change must come to the Wild Horse and Burro Program NOW has borne some fruit, but more needs to be done, and I urge the Committee to continue its aggressive oversight of this program.

As the Committee knows, since 1971 the Secretary of the Interior has been charged with managing wild horses and burros on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) rangelands in order to protect the herds and ensure healthy rangelands.

Today, there are roughly 36,940 wild horses on BLM lands. More than 30,000 additional wild horses are being held in short- and long-term holding facilities because by law the Bureau of Land Management must remove thousands of animals from public rangelands each year in order to maintain scientifically appropriate herd sizes. And by law the Bureau of Land Management assumes responsibility for the care of these animals.

In 2008, as the Committee is well aware, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) warned that if the costs of caring for these horses in holding facilities were not controlled, they would eventually overwhelm the Bureau of Land Management's wild horse budget. In short, GAO said that if we don't fix this problem, we are heading for a financial, and environmental disaster.

The Bureau of Land Management itself estimates that the cost of holding animals in all of its facilities - short and long-term - consumes nearly three-quarters of its appropriation for wild horse management. In order to keep pace, spending for the Bureau of Land Management to manage wild horses has more than tripled from \$20.4 million in FY2000 to \$64 million in FY2010. For FY2011, the Obama Administration wanted \$75.7 million.

To improve the management of BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program, GAO in its 2008 report specifically recommended that the Secretary of the Interior should direct BLM to develop "cost-effective alternatives to the process of caring for wild horses removed from the range in long-term holding facilities and seek the legislative changes that may be necessary to implement those alternatives."

The witness who spoke before me, Mrs. Madeleine Pickens, proposed to BLM back in 2008 a unique, and I believe cost-effective, alternative to BLM's current process for caring for wild horses. I know that some people believe the Pickens' plan cannot work; that is debatable. What upsets me is that BLM seems unwilling to even have that debate; unwilling to look beyond

business as usual. When business as usual is costing the American taxpayer money that we don't have to spend and contributing to inhumane treatment of these animals; business as usual to me is simply unacceptable.

In January 2010, Secretary of the Interior Salazar published an op-ed in the Los Angeles Times, that "We must recognize that the federal government alone cannot restore the health of wild horse herds. We need citizens to help. We want Americans to visit their public lands where horses roam, to help us care for these magnificent animals, to share their ideas with us and to help us find citizens and animal lovers across the country who will adopt wild horses and provide healthy, happy homes for them."

Yet, Mrs. Pickens has had an idea on the table for three years and no one at BLM wanted to listen. They were just happy to go along with the status quo.

That is why I offered my amendment to H.R. 1 to cut a modest \$2 million from the Bureau of Land Management's general funds, as a message to the bureaucracy at the Bureau of Land Management that it is high time to finally get serious about fixing this program. Developing cost-effective alternatives to the process of caring for wild horses removed from the range in long-term holding facilities would be a win for the animals as well as a win for the American taxpayer.

The House of Representatives approved H.R. 1 on February 19th. On February 24th, the Bureau of Land Management announced that it would accelerate its "planned" reforms to how it manages wild horses and burros on public lands; including issuing a request for proposal for members of the public to enter into partnerships with the Federal government for long-term care of wild horses. On March 25th the BLM issued a request for proposals to establish wild horse Eco-sanctuaries to be established on public private lands out West - EXACTLY the kind of proposal that Madeleine Pickens first started pitching to the BLM back in 2008.

It is possible that the timing of these actions is purely coincidental but it is also possible that these actions are BLM's response to the House of Representative's support of the Burton amendment to H.R. 1. I am concerned, however, that these long-overdue reforms may once again fall victim to a stubborn bureaucracy unless this Committee continues to exercise aggressive oversight. That is why I am here today, not to advocate for a specific level of funding for the Wild Horse and Burro program; although I would urge you to do what you can to ensure adequate funding to care for the animals already taken off the range. I am here today to respectfully ask the Committee to use the tools at your disposal - funding restrictions, regular progress reports, whatever is appropriate - to ensure that the Bureau of Land Management keeps moving forward. I want them to look at every viable alternative, to explore every idea and find a better and cheaper alternative before it is too late to avoid the financial and environmental disaster that GAO warned about more than three years ago.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to testify today and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.