

April 4, 2025

Mr. Michael McDonald
Acting Chairman
National Endowment for the Humanities
400 7th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20506

Dear Mr. McDonald,

I write to express deep concern regarding the notices received by the Northern Marianas Humanities Council on April 2, 2025, terminating three critical federal grants and placing at risk the continuation of the programs and services that have long supported the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

Your notice states that the terminations represent “an urgent priority for the administration,” warranting a departure from the traditional notification process, and that the grant funds are to be reallocated in a manner that furthers the President’s agenda. While I fully respect and support the President’s authority to pursue his vision for the nation, I am struggling to understand how this decision aligns with the broader objectives of his administration—particularly in terms of strategic engagement in the Indo-Pacific and responsiveness to the unique, localized needs of communities across the United States.

The CNMI, which I have the honor of representing, is the closest American territory to East Asia’s major population centers. Our unique history and identity are essential to advancing American ideals and influence in the Pacific. The Northern Marianas Humanities Council has played an irreplaceable role in preserving and promoting this narrative. Its work—funded through the very grants now targeted for termination—has captured the story of American progress in the CNMI and demonstrated the strength of our alignment with the United States to our regional neighbors.

Through oral histories, educational programs, and cultural preservation initiatives, the Northern Marianas Humanities Council has contributed directly to national conversations about defense, security, and economic development in the Indo-Pacific. Its programming illustrates how local heritage and national identity can coexist and thrive under the American flag.

Throughout my time in Congress, I have advocated against one-size-fits-all federal policies—a principle I know this administration shares. In this case, I am deeply concerned that a blanket action, made without full regard for the CNMI’s distinct circumstances and strategic importance, could unintentionally undermine the very goals the administration seeks to achieve.

I respectfully urge your reconsideration of this decision and request the opportunity to discuss how you believe eliminating these essential resources supports the President's vision. The Northern Marianas Humanities Council and the people of the CNMI deserve thoughtful engagement, and I remain committed to working with you to ensure our communities are supported and empowered as a part of our country's larger efforts in the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KH' followed by a stylized flourish.

KIMBERLYN KING-HINDS
Member of Congress