REGIONAL ARCHIVAL ASSOCIATIONS CONSORTIUM GAINED SEAT ON NCH POLICY BOARD: In January 2017, RAAC was instated as a Sustaining Member on the National Coalition for History Policy Board. The term runs from January 2017 to January 2019. RAAC joins SAA and CoSA in representing archival interests on the Board.

TRUMP FY18 BUDGET PROPOSES DEVASTATING CUTS TO HISTORY-RELATED PROGRAMMING: On May 23, President Trump sent his proposed fiscal year (FY) 2018 budget request to Congress. As expected, it includes devastating cuts to federal history and humanities funding including elimination of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and K-12 history and civics grants and Title VI/Fulbright-Hays international education programs at the U.S. Department of Education.

NCH Executive Director Lee White puts this in perspective:

“Despite the initial chilling headlines and dire prognoses the Trump budget evoked, now that the dust has settled it’s possible to take a more sober look at what likely lies ahead for federal history, archival and education programs. While few expect the draconian Trump cuts to be enacted as proposed, that does not by any means imply that continued funding for history programs will occur without an aggressive lobbying effort on our part. The general mood in Congress still trends towards reducing funding for discretionary domestic programs. While our community should and will fight vigorously against these proposed cuts, I cannot stress enough that there is no need to panic.

“For a frame of reference, Congress recently passed a FY 17 budget seven months AFTER the fiscal year started. The president usually submits a budget to the Hill in February or March. Congress is already months behind in what has always proven to be a protracted process. With Congress out the month of August for summer recess, there is no chance the FY 18 budget will be in place by Oct. 1.

“This is a war of attrition that will be fought through the appropriations maze in both houses of Congress. We will need to focus our attention, as we always have, on the appropriations subcommittees with jurisdiction over the programs that affect our constituents. Over the years we have built lasting relationships in Congress that we can draw upon. In addition, the Congressional History Caucus that we helped found will play a vital role in educating House members about the services these federal history programs provide to their constituents. You can expect that NCH will be issuing a number of legislative alerts in the coming months as the FY18 budget moves forward. We will try not to overwhelm you with these requests to contact the Hill; be assured we will only ask for your help at the appropriate time.” -- Lee White, Executive Director, NCH

As always, learn more at http://historycoalition.org/ and feel free to contact me with any questions.

—Jan Zastrow, RAAC-NCH Representative, zastrow@hawaii.edu
FY18 BUDGET UPDATE AS OF JULY 14, 2017: Although President Trump’s proposed FY18 budget included elimination of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and K-12 history and civics grants and Title VI/Fulbright-Hays international education programs at the U.S. Department of Education, it mostly hasn’t been as bad as that. On July 13, the House Appropriations Committee approved the FY 18 Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill. NCH Executive Director Lee White has parsed the figures out from the massive report. Keep in mind that the Senate may be more generous:

NEH: $145 million, down $4.8 million from last year.

NHPRC: $4 Million, a $2 million cut from the current FY’s $6 million (but the Trump administration proposed eliminating the IMLS so this is a major victory).

Smithsonian Institution:
- Salaries and Expenses -$12.4M from FY 17 level down to $716.6 million
- Facilities Capital +$34.5M from FY 17 level up to $168.5M (most of this is to renovate Air & Space Museum on the Mall).
- Total Smithsonian is up $22.1M to $885.1 million.

National Park Service
- Historic Preservation Programs: -$6.6 Million to a level of $74.4 million
- National Recreation and Preservation (this includes cultural programs that concern us): - $2.9M to $59.6 million.
- American Battlefield Protection Program level funding at $10 million.

Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars: -$500,000 to $10 million.

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS): $231 million. That is level funding from FY 17 (the Trump administration proposed eliminating the IMLS so this is another major victory).

Title VI (overseas)/Fulbright-Hays (domestic) international education programs: $7 million for domestic has been eliminated. Not sure yet about Title VI overseas.

NARA: $364.3 million for operating expenses, a $16.3 million cut (approx -4.75%) as proposed by the Trump administration.

The Library of Congress: $648 million, an increase of $16 million from fiscal 2017 levels.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting: $445 million, the same as last year.

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—Jan Zastrow, RAAC-NCH Representative, zastrow@hawaii.edu