

The Senator from Nevada.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF
THE CHAIR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 8:11 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 9:37 p.m. when called to order by the President pro tempore.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATIONS DISCHARGED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session and that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration of the nomination of Michael Hammond to be the chairperson of the National Endowment for the Arts. I ask that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, that any statements thereon be printed in the RECORD, and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nomination was considered and confirmed, as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

Michael Hammond, of Texas, to be Chairperson of the National Endowment for the Arts for a term of four years.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I welcome this opportunity to express my strong support for the confirmation of Michael Hammond to be Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, and I urge the Senate to confirm him.

Mr. Hammond is a distinguished composer, conductor, arts educator and scientist. His is the Dean of the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University, where he is also a professor of music and a faculty fellow in neuroscience.

Mr. Hammond is an excellent choice to lead the Arts Endowment. He is also one of the nation's leaders in the field of cognitive development and he understands the vast potential of the arts in early childhood education. I welcome his leadership, and I believe that he will be an outstanding chairman for this very important agency.

During the consideration of his nomination by the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, I submitted a number of questions to Mr. Hammond. His responses are impressive and I ask unanimous consent that they may be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

QUESTIONS BY SENATOR EDWARD KENNEDY FOR
MICHAEL HAMMOND, NOMINEE FOR CHAIRMAN
OF THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

1. Do you support the mission of the National Endowment for the Arts and believe that there is a federal role in support of the arts?

Yes. The Arts Endowment's mandate is to provide national recognition and support to significant projects of artistic excellence, thus preserving and enhancing our nation's diverse cultural heritage. This is a noble and essential national goal and I embrace it completely. I believe there are important aspects of this task that can best be performed at the federal level. If I have the opportunity to serve as chairman, I will work to advance the Endowment's mandate in every conceivable way.

2. Are there any circumstances under which you would support the elimination of the agency?

No.

3. Due to budget cuts and the impact of inflation, the NEA's spending power has been dramatically reduced. The decline in funding has also reduced the agency's reach and impact. How do you view the current funding? Will you advocate for higher spending levels for the agency?

Although the Endowment's financial resources are limited, it has a national voice that I believe should articulate clearly and strongly the importance of the arts in enriching the lives and shaping the aesthetic taste of all Americans. It is now more important than ever that the Endowment make performances and presentations of the highest artistic quality accessible to our urban, rural and suburban communities.

The Endowment's financial capability is important both for the direct project grants it makes and for the matching money grants generated from other sources. I would advocate for spending levels that are more adequate in fulfilling the full gamut of the Endowment's goals. Should I have the honor to be the chairman, I would look for ways to stimulate more public and private support for the arts and arts education.

4. How do you think the Endowment should best balance its various programs which support the creation and presentation of the arts with providing broad access to the arts?

Each of these tasks is crucial and the balance between them, though difficult, must be reconsidered regularly. A full review of the Endowment's activities in both these areas (creation/presentation and broad access) would be a high priority for me. Further, I would pursue these goals nationwide in rural, urban and suburban communities, in close cooperation with state and local arts groups and educational organizations committed to the arts.

5. What do you think are the highest programming priorities for the agency?

In the days following September 11, in ceremony after ceremony, Americans turned to the arts, especially music and poetry, for expressions of our anguish over our human losses and for confirmation of our common commitments as Americans. It is essential that the Arts Endowment help provide opportunities for our citizens to experience works whose meaning transcends the momentary and speak to us as human beings, sharing one another's mortality and longing for beauty and understanding.

At the same time the Endowment must, I believe, work to create conditions favorable to our professional artists—conditions in which they will be inspired to fulfill their deepest artistic aspirations, encouraging all

of us to understand ourselves and one another in continuously new ways. If I am given the opportunity to serve, I will also try to direct the Endowment's efforts toward enlivening the artistic culture of the nation from the ground up by strengthening all forms of educational activity in the arts, especially among the young. If there is to be a further flowering of our artistic culture in the coming years, it must begin by making the best achievements of our rich heritage a reality in the lives of our young people.

6. You have had an extremely accomplished career in music and music education. Do you have any thoughts about ways that the agency can develop or initiate programs for young children and the arts?

To ensure the artistic future of our country, I believe, today's children and those of generations to come must have the opportunity to learn by actual experience, the techniques of music-making, the skills of drawing, painting and sculpting, dance movement, poetry and other forms of writing, and the art of acting and play-making. Such experiences together with regular access to the finest art can stimulate a child's imagination, engage the intellect, create discipline, produce physical skill and enhance curiosity and joy. Few may become professional artists, but many will become grateful audiences for the arts. A richer artistic culture can be brought into being with consistent effort over time in this way.

Should I have the honor of serving as the chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, I will explore how the agency can provide national leadership in promoting such hands-on educational programs in the arts for children from preschool through high school. The country has vast educational resources both public and private for this undertaking. These need to be surveyed, documented and enhanced.

It is my understanding that grants for arts education are now funded under two new Arts Endowment funding programs—Challenge America and Arts Learning. The state arts agencies also contribute very significantly to educational efforts in the arts, as do a number of private organizations and programs. The Endowment can advocate and promote models for cooperation among these groups and incentives for imaginative action.

From my own studies in neuroscience, I know there is a growing body of information concerning cognitive development among preschoolers showing their ability to discriminate clearly among musical sounds, visual colors, movements and language elements in a way that mandates programs of learning in the arts at very early ages. I would actively pursue this agenda and attempt to work closely with that growing body of scientists and educators throughout the world who are concerned with such early cognitive development.

7. How do you think the agency can best support K-12 education programs?

First, there must be an accurate assessment of the programs and institutions, both public and private, which are addressing the matter of arts education for school-age young people in each region of the country. Working with these groups and with the state and regional arts agencies, the Endowment can help to set goals for instruction and experience at each stage of a student's life, in each of the arts. The Endowment can encourage cooperative efforts among arts groups to get the job done. It is a challenging task that will require all our available institutional resources as well as a new