



## **What is going on?**

The South Dakota Humanities Council’s future is at risk due to DOGE cuts to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). These drastic reductions threaten the very foundation of South Dakota’s history and culture – everything that makes our state special.

The Federation of State Humanities Councils has informed us that DOGE and Trump are proposing a \$170 million cut to a \$207 million budget, which leaves only enough money to close NEH. **73% of SDHC revenue comes from NEH.**

## **What is the South Dakota Humanities Council?**

Founded in 1972 by the hard work of fellow South Dakotans responding to an act of Congress, the South Dakota Humanities Council (SDHC), a 501(c)(3) non-profit, is the only cultural organization in the state whose sole mission is to deliver humanities programming to the people of South Dakota.

We support and promote public programming in the humanities, provide grant funding for community programs and research and discussion projects, and carry out the mission of the South Dakota Center for the Book (established by the Library of Congress in 2002) through reading and literacy programs and the annual Festival of Books.

## **How does the South Dakota Humanities Council receive federal funds?**

South Dakota Humanities Council is funded by congress through an appropriation line in the annual budget of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). NEH uses a formula set by its founding legislation to calculate the amount each state and jurisdictional humanities council receives.

SDHC receives roughly \$950,000 from the federal government through the NEH, about 73% of our annual operating budget.

## **What programs does the South Dakota Humanities Council fund and conduct?**

- South Dakota Festival of Books, featuring more than 60 authors, illustrators, and publishing professionals and drawing over 5,000 attendees annually

- Young Readers program, **through which every third grader in South Dakota receives a free book**. This year’s book is *Wings of an Eagle: The Gold Medal Dreams of Billy Mills* by Billy Mills and Donna Janell Bowman, illustrated by S.D. Nelson
- Humanities grants and events, including:
  - Black Hills Works: Our Voices, Our Stories
  - Hutchinson County VFW Post 3298: Celebration of Freedom
  - Heritage Museum of Roberts County Stavig House Museum: If These Walls Could Talk
  - Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant Society: Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant
  - Lost & Found Storytelling is Suicide Prevention: #30Days30Stories
  - South Dakota State Poetry Society: Poetry on the Road
  - Earthlodge Gatherings in Sisseton
  - Aberdeen Public Schools Foundation: Images of the World
  - South Dakota State Spelling Bee
  - South Dakota Discovery Center (Pierre): Lessons from the Universe

### **Why do we need the federal government to fund the South Dakota Humanities Council?**

The South Dakota Humanities Council is the most direct and concrete way for federal dollars to reach all South Dakota communities, especially in rural areas of our state. Many small local organizations (like historical societies and rural school districts) do not have the capacity or training to compete for federal and private grants. Humanities council grants are simple to apply for, offered throughout the year, and reviewed locally with the capacity of small organizations in mind.

Funding from NEH allows SDHC to serve the whole state and support programs in every community in South Dakota.

### **Why does the federal government fund humanities?**

As the founding legislation of the NEH states, “democracy demands wisdom and vision in its citizens. It must therefore foster and support a form of education, and access to the arts and the humanities, designed to make people of all backgrounds and wherever located masters of their technology and not its unthinking servants.”

Federal funding ensures that humanities and cultural programs don’t just happen in rich or urban communities. Humanities councils reach every corner of their states and jurisdictions. Federal funding allows them to offer equal grants and programs to individuals and organizations in small towns and rural areas.

Funding SDHC allows the federal government to reach people in every corner of South Dakota through programs that create more informed citizens and encourage greater civic engagement.