

WNET AND PBS STATEMENT

Over the past few days, PBS and WNET have been in close consultation regarding the funding for ***Pension Peril***, a WNET initiative that aired in part on the PBS NewsHour Weekend; it looked at the critical issue of the economic sustainability of public pensions. These segments were funded by the Laura and John Arnold Foundation, one of the largest philanthropic organizations in the country, which has interests in many areas including criminal justice, K-12 education and public accountability.

Concerns have been raised about the funding of these segments because pension reform is one area of focus for the Arnold Foundation. While PBS stands by WNET's reporting in this series, in order to eliminate any perception on the part of the public, our viewers, and donors that the Foundation's interests influenced the editorial integrity of the reporting for this program, WNET has decided to forego the Arnold Foundation support and will return the gift.

"We made a mistake, pure and simple," said Stephen Segaller, Vice President of Programming at WNET. "The PBS NewsHour Weekend is a new production and while we thought we were following the guidelines and the correct vetting processes, we were incorrect. WNET sought the Arnold Foundation funding because of our belief that public pensions is an important issue. The Arnold Foundation did not direct or prescribe our reporting, never attempted to do so, and is not responsible for our mistake."

WNET believes that the topic of public pensions is a matter of journalistic importance and will continue to report on it as it has in the past.

PBS and WNET are grateful for the support of the foundations, corporations and individual members of public television stations that together make our mission-driven service possible. With the help of our many stakeholders, we look forward to continuing to provide the public with outstanding content found nowhere else in American media.