

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 28, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, and Education Appropriations
B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, and Education Appropriations 2358-
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole,

We write to thank the Subcommittee for its previous support, and to urge you to support robust funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) Office of Museum Services (OMS) in the FY 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill.

Museums across the country are struggling with the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. [Survey data](#) shows that one out of every three museums may shutter permanently without immediate support—a loss of 12,000 museums and 124,000 jobs—and confirms the financial state of U.S. museums is moving from bad to worse. 30 percent of museums remain closed since the March 2020 lockdown and those that have reopened are operating on an average of 35 percent of their regular attendance, a reduction that is unsustainable long-term even with recent federal relief support. Like other nonprofits, museums are suffering yet continue to work to meet the needs of their communities. From accommodating spaces for remote and virtual classrooms to providing lesson plans, online learning opportunities, and drop-off learning kits to teachers and families, museums are stable oases in the midst of turmoil.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, OMS has provided critical leadership to the museum community through its CARES Act grants for museums and the *REopening Archives, Libraries and Museums* (REALM) project. The REALM project is a research partnership between OCLC, IMLS-OMS, and Battelle to create and distribute science-based information and recommended practices designed to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff and visitors who are engaging in the delivery or use of museum services.

Despite its small size, the IMLS Office of Museum Services is the largest dedicated source of investment in our nation's museums, which pre-COVID-19 supported over 700,000 jobs and contributed \$50 billion annually to the U.S. economy. OMS funding plays a significant role in this economic impact by helping museums reach more visitors and spur community development. In addition to their economic benefits, OMS grants also support museums' advancements in areas such as public health upgrades, technology, lifelong community learning, and conservation and preservation. These successes notwithstanding, only a small fraction of the nation's museums are currently being reached and many highly rated grant applications go unfunded.

Museums will be vital to the nation's recovery and the recovery of communities, big and small, urban and rural, all across the country. At a time when school and community resources are strained, museums are working overtime to fill the gaps. Pre-COVID-19, they welcomed annually more than 55 million

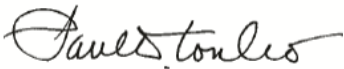
schoolchildren, bringing art, science, and cultural heritage into communities, and partnered with other nonprofits to meet the specific needs of their local population. In addition, our nation's museums opened their doors to more people than ever with over 850 million visits each year—with many of these visitors offered free or reduced admission. Museums are also part of a robust nonprofit community working to address a wide range of our nation's greatest challenges, from conducting medical research and helping veterans heal physically and psychologically, to creating energy efficient public buildings and collecting food for needy families.

Congress reauthorized IMLS in late 2018 by enacting the Museum and Library Services Act of 2018 (Public Law No: 115-410). This legislation was passed with widespread bipartisan support by unanimous consent in the Senate and by a vote of 331 to 28 in the House, showing Congress' bipartisan support for the agency's programs and a commitment to its funding. The agency is highly accountable, and its competitive, peer-reviewed grants leverage significant private resources while supporting museums in every state.

We urge the Subcommittee to support robust funding for the IMLS Office of Museum Services for FY 2022 to support the important work museums do in our districts. This vital funding will aid museums of all types and enable them to bolster economic recovery, serve our schools and communities, and preserve our cultural heritage for future generations.

Again, we appreciate the Subcommittee's prior support for OMS and request this investment to strengthen and sustain the work of our nation's museums.

Sincerely,



Paul D. Tonko

Member of Congress

/s/
Andy Barr

Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree

Member of Congress

/s/
David B. McKinley

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Also signed by:

/s/
A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress

/s/
Abigail Spanberger
Member of Congress

/s/
Adam Smith
Member of Congress

/s/
Al Green
Member of Congress

/s/
Al Lawson
Member of Congress

/s/
Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

/s/
Albio Sires
Member of Congress

/s/
Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress

/s/
André Carson
Member of Congress

/s/
Andy Kim
Member of Congress

/s/
Andy Levin
Member of Congress

/s/
Angie Craig
Member of Congress

/s/
Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress

/s/
Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

/s/
Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress

/s/
Anthony Gonzalez
Member of Congress

/s/
Antonio Delgado
Member of Congress

/s/
Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress

/s/
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

/s/
Bill Foster
Member of Congress

/s/
Bill Pascrell Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/
Billy Long
Member of Congress

/s/
Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress

/s/
Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress

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Brett Guthrie
Member of Congress

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Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

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Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

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Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress

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Chris Pappas
Member of Congress

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Colin Allred
Member of Congress

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Cori Bush
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Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress

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Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

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Darin LaHood
Member of Congress

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David N. Cicilline
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Dean Phillips
Member of Congress

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Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

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Deborah Ross
Member of Congress

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Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

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Dina Titus
Member of Congress

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Don Young
Member of Congress

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Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress

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Donald Norcross
Member of Congress

/s/
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/
Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

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Dwight Evans
Member of Congress

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Earl Blumenauer
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
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Elise M. Stefanik
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Elissa Slotkin
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Emanuel Cleaver, II
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Eric Swalwell
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Filemon Vela
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G.K. Butterfield
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Glenn "GT" Thompson
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Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
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Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress

/s/
Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress

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Hakeem Jeffries
Member of Congress

/s/
Haley Stevens
Member of Congress

/s/
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress

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Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress

/s/
Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

/s/
Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

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Jake Auchincloss
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James Langevin
Member of Congress

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James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

/s/
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

/s/
Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

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Jared Golden
Member of Congress

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Jason Crow
Member of Congress

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Jeff Van Drew
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Jenniffer González-Colón
Member of Congress

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Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

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Jerry McNerney
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Jim Cooper
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Jim Himes
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Jimmy Gomez
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Jimmy Panetta
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Joe Courtney
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Joe Neguse
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Joe Wilson
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John B. Larson
Member of Congress

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John Garamendi
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John P. Sarbanes
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John Yarmuth
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Joseph D. Morelle
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Josh Gottheimer
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Joyce Beatty
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Judy Chu
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Julia Brownley
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Kaiali'i Kahele
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Karen Bass
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Kathleen M. Rice
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Kathy Castor
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Linda T. Sánchez
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Lisa Blunt Rochester
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Lloyd Doggett
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Lucy McBath
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Madeleine Dean
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Marc Veasey
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Marie Newman
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Mark DeSaulnier
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Mary Gay Scanlon
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Michael F. Q. San Nicolas
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Mike Doyle
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Mike Levin
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Mike Thompson
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Rick Larsen
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Ro Khanna
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Rodney Davis
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Ron Kind
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Ruben Gallego
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Salud O. Carbajal
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Sanford D. Bishop
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Scott Peters
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Sean Casten
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Sean Patrick Maloney
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Seth Moulton
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Sheila Jackson Lee
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Steve Cohen
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Young Kim
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Zoe Lofgren
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