Dear Chairman Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro,

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 2025 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill.

The pandemic inflicted considerable damage on US museums, the vast majority of which are 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organizations. While the museum field is making strides in its recovery efforts, it will take years to fully rebound to pre-pandemic levels of staffing, revenue, and attendance. Survey data shows two-thirds of museums continue to experience reduced attendance, averaging 71% of their pre-pandemic attendance. Despite the tremendous financial and psychological stress caused by the pandemic, museum professionals filled the gaps to meet the needs of their communities. They continue to demonstrate the critical role museums play in our country’s infrastructure and deepened their impact in their communities.

Moving forward, OMS leadership and vital financial support is more important than ever to museums large and small, urban and rural, across our country. OMS provides museums essential help to navigate change and continue to improve their services to better enable them to champion lifelong learning, strengthen community engagement and advance collections stewardship and access to our nation’s cultural heritage.

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 are vital to their communities. 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 essential community infrastructure and 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 families in need.

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 2025 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

Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress

Val Hoyle  
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress

Brittany Petterson  
Member of Congress

Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress
Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress  
Kansas Third District

Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress

Sean Casten  
Member of Congress

John Garamendi  
Member of Congress

Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress

Ayanna Pressley  
Member of Congress

Haley M. Stevens  
Member of Congress

Suzan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress

Deborah K. Ross  
Member of Congress

Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress
Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress

Lisa Blunt Rochester  
Member of Congress

Tony Cárdenas  
Member of Congress

Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan  
Member of Congress

Cori Bush  
Member of Congress

Veronica Escobar  
Member of Congress

Darin LaHood  
Member of Congress

Mike Levin  
Member of Congress
Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress

Kim Schrier, M.D.  
Member of Congress

André Carson  
Member of Congress

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

Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Member of Congress

Angie Craig  
Member of Congress

Colin Z. Allred  
Member of Congress

Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress

Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress

Adam Smith
Member of Congress

Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress

Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

Jim Himes
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

William R. Keating
Member of Congress

Nikema Williams
Member of Congress

Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress
Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress

Andrew R. Garbarino
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Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress

Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
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Gerald E. Connolly  
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Seth Magaziner  
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Marcus J. Molinaro  
Member of Congress

Bradley Scott Schneider  
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen  
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Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress

Greg Larsen  
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Becca Balint  
Member of Congress
Kathy Manning
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Suzanne Bonamici
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Melanie A. Stansbury
Member of Congress

Wiley Nickel
Member of Congress

Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress

Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress

Glenn Ivey
Member of Congress

Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress

Sydney Kamlager-Dove
Member of Congress

C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger
Member of Congress
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Raul Grijalva (D-AZ-7)
Julia Brownley (D-CA-26)
Salud Carbajal (D-CA-24)
Tony Cardenas (D-CA-29)
Judy Chu (D-CA-27)
Luis Correa (D-CA-46)
Mark DeSaulnier (D-CA-11)
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Jimmy Gomez (D-CA-34)
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Mike Levin (D-CA-49)
Doris Matsui (D-CA-6)
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Scott Peters (D-CA-50)
Katie Porter (D-CA-47)
Linda T. Sánchez (D-CA-38)
Adam B. Schiff (D-CA-28)
Eric Swalwell (D-CA-15)
Mark Takano (D-CA-41)
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Jason Crow (D-CO-6)
Dianna DeGette (D-CO-1)
Brittany Pettersen (D-CO-7)
Joe Courtney (D-CT-2)
Jahana Hayes (D-CT-5)
Jim Himes (D-CT-4)
John B. Larson (D-CT-1)
Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC-1)
Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE-1)
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Nikki Budzinski (D-IL-13)
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Danny K. Davis (D-IL-7)
Bill Foster (D-IL-11)
Jonathan Jackson (D-IL-1)
Robin L. Kelly (D-IL-2)
Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL-8)
Darin LaHood (R-IL-18)
Delia Ramirez (D-IL-3)
Jan Schakowsky (D-IL-9)
Brad Schneider (D-IL-10)
André Carson (D-IN-7)
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Andy Barr (R-KY-6)
Jake Auchincloss (D-MA-4)
Bill Keating (D-MA-9)
Stephen Lynch (D-MA-8)
James P. McGovern (D-MA-2)
Seth Moulton (D-MA-6)
Richard E. Neal (D-MA-1)
Ayanna Pressley (D-MA-7)
Lori Trahan (D-MA-3)
Glenn Ivey (D-MD-4)
Jama Raskin (D-MD-8)
Dutch Ruppersberger (D-MD-2)
John P. Sarbanes (D-MD-3)
Jared Golden (D-ME-2)
Chellie Pingree (D-ME-1)
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Elissa Slotkin (D-MI-7)
Haley M. Stevens (D-MI-11)
 Rashida Tlaib (D-MI-13)
Angie Craig (D-MN-2)
Ilhan Omar (D-MN-5)
Cora Bush (D-MO-1)
Emanuel Cleaver, II (D-MO-5)
Gregorio Sablan (D-MP-1)
Alma Adams (D-NC-12)
Kathy E. Manning (D-NC-6)
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Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ-5)
Andy Kim (D-NJ-3)
Robert J. Menendez (D-NJ-8)
Frank Pallone (D-NJ-6)
Bill Pascrell (D-NJ-9)
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Jerrold Nadler (D-NY-10)
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Glenn "GT" Thompson (R-PA-15)
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Gabe Amo (D-RI-1)
Seth Magaziner (D-RI-2)
Colin Allred (D-TX-32)
Jasmine Crockett (D-TX-30)
Lloyd Doggett (D-TX-35)
Veronica Escobar (D-TX-16)
Lizzie Fletcher (D-TX-7)
Vicente Gonzalez (D-TX-15)
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Adam Smith (D-WA-9)
Gwen S. Moore (D-WI-4)

* For your reference, here is the list of the 129 Representatives who signed the letter alphabetical by state.