

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 27, 2025

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

As members of New York's Congressional Delegation, we are writing to express our strong opposition to your recent Executive Order, which calls for the elimination of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) "to the maximum extent consistent with applicable law."¹ The proposed cuts to the core functions of the IMLS pose a significant threat to the survival of our nation's cultural and educational institutions.

The IMLS plays a crucial role in supporting these institutions and is a cornerstone of our cultural and educational landscape. Your Executive Order would have a devastating impact on New York, which is home to an extensive network of museums and libraries, many of which serve as vital educational and cultural hubs for their communities. Many of New York's museums and libraries have received vital funding from the IMLS, including the 9/11 Memorial & Museum in New York City. The programming supported by this funding enriches the lives of New Yorkers and visitors alike.

From the world-class institutions of the Hudson Valley and the Capital Region to the diverse cultural centers of Western and Upstate New York, these institutions attract visitors from around the globe, enrich local economies, and provide indispensable learning opportunities for residents of all ages. Additionally, New York City has the highest concentration of museums in the United States, with over 188 museums and cultural institutions. Furthermore, the New York Public Library, the largest public library system in the country, risks losing vital funding that supports essential services benefiting millions of residents and visitors each year.

The decision to eliminate or cut the IMLS's core functions is not only shortsighted but also economically unsound. The IMLS represents just 0.0046% of the federal budget, yet it

¹ Trump, Donald J. "Continuing the Reduction of the Federal Bureaucracy." Executive Order, March 14, 2025. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/continuing-the-reduction-of-the-federal-bureaucracy/>

supports a sector that generates over \$50 billion in economic benefits and sustains more than 726,000 jobs nationwide.

The arts and humanities play a vital role in enriching American life, showcasing the diversity and creativity that define our nation. They are not merely cultural assets but essential lifelines for communities, providing education, job training, internet access, and spaces for civic engagement.

The United States is renowned for housing some of the world's most distinguished and groundbreaking cultural institutions. Museums and cultural venues represent a wide range of American experiences, from iconic Broadway theaters in New York City to unique sites such as the National Video Game Museum in Frisco, Texas, the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute in Birmingham, Alabama, and the Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. Collectively, more than 35,000 museums across the nation support over 372,100 jobs and generate \$15 billion in annual revenue.

As hubs of literacy and innovation, our nation's 125,000 public, school, academic, and special libraries deserve increased support, not reduced funding. These institutions are crucial for preserving American art, history, and culture while promoting community engagement and lifelong learning. The Museum and Library Services Act of 2018 clearly established that the IMLS is legally obligated under Section 9133 to allocate federal funding to state libraries through the Grants to States program.² Congress enacted this law with a clear intent to ensure that federal support would reach libraries nationwide, recognizing the indispensable role they play in education, innovation, and community building.

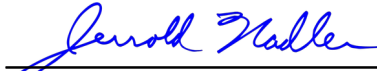
Support from IMLS is crucial for libraries to maintain statewide digital resources and collections, create support systems for individual public, school, and academic libraries, and facilitate interlibrary loan programs. At a time when the nation should be investing in cultural preservation and community support, eliminating IMLS funding threatens to dismantle the foundational support that libraries and cultural institutions rely on to strengthen our democracy and promote social cohesion.

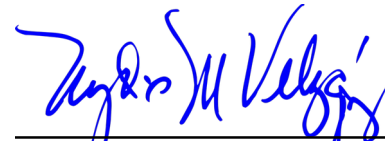
We strongly urge you to immediately rescind this Executive Order and instead prioritize the continued funding of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. These institutions are fundamental to our communities, our economy, and our shared cultural heritage. Eliminating their support would undermine the very foundation of educational and cultural access that Americans rely on every day. We are committed to collaborating with your administration to protect these vital resources and ensure they continue to serve the American people.


² United States. Congress. "Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018." Public Law 115-141, March 23, 2018. GovInfo. Accessed March 20, 2025. <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/PLAW-115publ141>.


Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

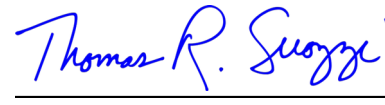

Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

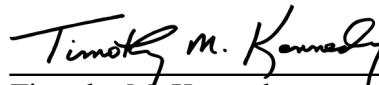

Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

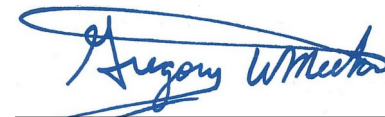

Ritchie Torres
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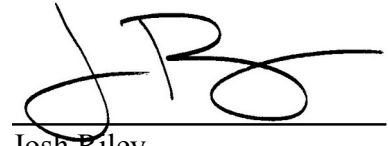
Patrick Ryan
Member of Congress



Laura A. Gillen
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Paul D. Tonko
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Josh Riley
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Joseph D. Morelle
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