



April 22, 2025

The Honorable Keith Sonderling  
Acting Director  
Institute of Museum and Library Services  
955 L'Enfant Plaza, North, SW, Suite 4000  
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Mr. Sonderling,

We write to express our opposition to the Institute of Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) senseless and indefensible decision to terminate grants to libraries in Connecticut and California.

Congress passed the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) in 1996 to provide dedicated funding for libraries to modernize and extend services to communities, providing states with the flexibility to subgrant and design programs to address their local needs. Grants under the LSTA provide critical funding for summer reading programs, early literacy, e-books, bookmobiles, accessible books such as braille books, and statewide library services. State libraries also use grant funding for targeted outreach and services to communities in need, including military families, veterans, disabled individuals, and senior citizens. The LSTA is also used in determining eligibility for and supporting the Federal Communications Commission and Universal Service Fund's E-Rate program, which provides discounts for important internet access and connectivity services for over 100,000 schools and over 12,500 libraries impacting nearly 54 million students nationwide.<sup>1</sup>

On April 1, 2025, IMLS notified the state library administrative agencies of Connecticut, California, and Washington that their federal LSTA grants were terminated effective immediately.<sup>2</sup> In a notice sent from you, IMLS claimed that the grant was "inconsistent with IMLS' priorities" with no explanation for its sudden decision or an opportunity to appeal. Through these terminations, IMLS is violating Congress' clear intent in appropriating state grant funding for the LSTA. Moreover, based on the Administration's clear opposition to the mission of IMLS and pattern of making decisions without a concrete legal foundation, we are concerned

---

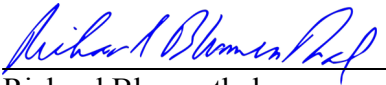
<sup>1</sup> "Supreme Court Upholds Protections for Schools and Libraries in Broadband Access Case," Southern Education Foundation, February 7, 2025, <https://southerneducation.org/in-the-news/erate/#:~:text=Today%2C%20E%2DRate%20supports%20106%2C000,access%20to%20digital%20learning%20tools>.

<sup>2</sup> Sarah D. Wire, "Libraries Are under Siege: How Trump's Cuts Put Community Hubs in Peril," USA Today, April 3, 2025, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2025/04/03/libraries-trump-federal-funding-cuts/82598580007/>.

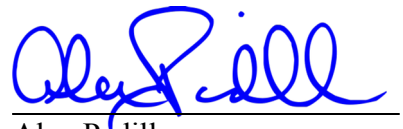
that IMLS's decision to cut off these funds may have been based on political considerations with no grounding in the law.

In cutting off these much-needed federal grants to libraries, you are recklessly putting at risk critical digital connectivity resources, and educational programs — threatening access for rural and urban libraries and harming veterans, the disabled, and senior citizens. We demand that the IMLS reinstate the LSTA grants immediately and provide an explanation for their abrupt and baseless terminations by May 6, 2025.

Sincerely,



Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



Alex Padilla  
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff  
United States Senator