

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

April 29, 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 are writing to you about the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) April 8, 2025, Notice of Grant Termination (Grant Application No. LG-255048-OLS-23) directed to the New Jersey State Library (NJSL). The NJSL relies upon these funds to carry out Teaching Information Literacy, a project developing an instructional framework and educational activities that K-12 teachers and school librarians use to teach K-12 students in New Jersey statutorily required information literacy skills. The termination of this grant has significant implications: New Jersey K-12 teachers and librarians will no longer have access to specially-designed tools and learning activities to teach New Jersey's emerging information literacy skill standards.

This project was funded through IMLS's discretionary National Leadership Grants for Libraries program. While discretionary, it directly supports IMLS's statutory mission and complements the agency's Grants to States program, which enables the NJSL to provide a wide range of essential services to New Jersey's libraries and residents.

The termination notice cites Executive Order 14238, *Continuing the Reduction of the Federal Bureaucracy*, dated March 14, 2025, and states that the grant is "no longer consistent with agency priorities." The grant is closely aligned, however, with IMLS's statutory mission as authorized and funded by Congress under the Library Services and Technology Act and directly supports it. IMLS's Grants to States Program receives dedicated appropriations annually from Congress and is enumerated explicitly in federal law. In FY24, Congress directed IMLS to allocate \$180 million to this program alone, a clear indication of the widespread support for IMLS.

Annually, the NJSL receives approximately \$4.5 million from IMLS's statutory Grants to States Program. These grants support academic research, workforce development, digital inclusion, cultural preservation, and educational access in every corner of our state. Among other things, this funding helps maintain Jersey Connect, the statewide broadband and technology infrastructure that supports more than 350 public libraries, and JerseyClicks, 24 educational and research databases searched more than 42 million times in 2024. The online databases purchased with Grants to States funds are used in public, academic, and K-12 libraries throughout the state, and in some cases are the only online research tools available to smaller libraries with fewer resources.

New Jersey's libraries are widely used by residents. There are currently 3,235,789 registered individuals with library cards, and in 2024 alone, libraries in our state welcomed more than 27 million visitors, hosted 219,495 programs, and saw more than 4.1 million program attendees. Moreover, federal IMLS funding supports vital services for approximately 13,000 New Jersey residents with visual impairments and the salaries of 20 state library staff members.

The Administration's Executive Order issued on March 14, 2025, threatens to effectively dismantle the IMLS. The consequences would devastate libraries and museums in New Jersey and nationwide and lead to the potential loss of jobs in these institutions. It would jeopardize essential services that help support education, digital access, and economic opportunity for millions of Americans.

We respectfully urge IMLS to immediately rescind the grant termination and reaffirm its unwavering commitment to its statutory mission.

Sincerely,



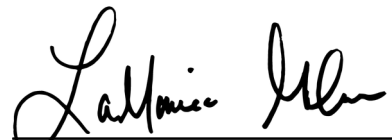
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Andy Kim
United States Senator



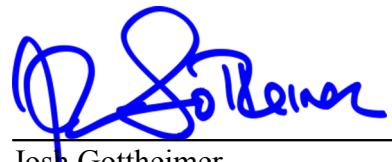
Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress



LaMonica McIver
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