



Statement on the Institute of Museum and Library Services from the Iowa Library Association

The state of Iowa has a rich history of library services from the Des Moines Public Library Director, Forrest Spaulding, writing the Library Bill of Rights (1939) to having a near total coverage of Iowans served by public libraries (99%). The State Library of Iowa is able to support our robust net of libraries, and much of that is made possible with funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the only federal agency that administers funding to our nation's libraries.

In Federal Fiscal Year 2024, the State Library of Iowa received \$2,210,343 which was used to provide a suite of services to Iowa libraries including:

Continuing education for library staff & State Library Endorsement
OverDrive/Libby digital library consortium
IA Shares and the inter library loan system, State of Iowa Libraries Online (SILO)
People's Law Library of Iowa
Putting Libraries on the Web (PLOW) initiative providing website hosting for public libraries
Standards and Accreditation program to support the development of high-quality libraries in Iowa
State Data Center & Iowa Library Statistics
Summer Library Program, All Iowa Reads & STEM to Go

IMLS makes lasting impacts in Iowa with grants for our museums as well, having allocated just shy of \$1,000,000 in FY23. (Iowa Museum Association Annual Report 2023)

On March 14th the President signed an executive order calling for the elimination to the maximum extent of six federal agencies, one of which is the IMLS. This order comes as part of the ongoing 'reduction of the federal bureaucracy' to 'continue the reduction in the elements of the Federal bureaucracy that the President has determined are unnecessary.'

Several days after this order was signed, deputy secretary of labor, Keith E. Sonderling, was named the new acting director of IMLS. Yesterday, March 31st, after a site visit from DOGE, all 70 IMLS employees were put on a 90-day administrative leave, bringing all IMLS work to a halt.

Though modest in comparison to the annual federal budget of \$7 trillion, Iowa libraries and museums use each Federal dollar allocated to make lasting and far-reaching impacts for our patrons. The Iowa Library Association calls on all Iowans to stand up and speak out on behalf of our prized libraries and museums.

It is vital that everyone contact their elected officials and urge them to allow the IMLS employees to return to their jobs so they can continue the good and congressionally mandated work of supporting our nation's museums and libraries.

Take Action:

American Library Association:

<https://app.oneclickpolitics.com/campaign-page?cid=9CyapZUB9sorxFLO4J0c&lang=en>

Every Library:

<https://action.everylibrary.org/saveimls2025>

American Association for State and Local History:

<https://www.congressweb.com/aam?redirectto=%2Faam%2F94&cookieid=7E2DD474-90FC-8A6E-F6D17744BC90FAD9,7E2DD474-90FC-8A6E-F6D17744BC90FAD9>

American Alliance of Museums:

<https://www.congressweb.com/aam/95/>

Further Reading:

State Library of Iowa LSTA Funds: <https://statelibraryofiowa.gov/media/135/download?inline=>

ALA FAQ: Executive Order Targeting IMLS: <https://www.ala.org/faq-executive-order-targeting-imls>

National Museum and Library Services Board letter to Sonderling:

https://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/IMLS%20Board%20Letter_032325.pdf