

Lawsuit Filed Over Cuts to IMLS, Federal Agencies

by [Hallie Rich](#)

Apr 04, 2025 | Filed in [News](#)

On Friday, April 4 attorneys general from 21 states filed [a lawsuit against the Trump Administration](#) to stop the elimination of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) as well as the Minority Business Development Agency and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. The lawsuit states, “The sudden halting of the agencies’ work after decades of close cooperation will immediately put at risk hundreds of millions of dollars in grant funding on which the States depend, and undermine library programs, economic opportunity, and the free flow of commerce throughout the country.”

The lawsuit claims that the [March 14 Executive Order](#) violates the Administrative Procedure Act and the Constitution by eliminating many of the programs that the agencies are statutorily required to carry out. The lawsuit also alleges that the Executive Order unconstitutionally overrides Congress’s power to decide how federal funds are spent.

This legal action comes following a week of rapid changes at IMLS. On March 31, the [IMLS placed its approximately 75-person workforce on paid administrative leave](#), effective “immediately.” On April 3, [the IMLS board sent a letter to Acting Interim Director Keith Sonderling](#) requesting clarification on the administrative leave implementation as well as the status of several statutory obligations. Several major publishers—Penguin Random House, Hachette Book Group, Macmillan Publishers, Simon & Schuster, and Sourcebooks—also [sent a letter to Congress urging them “to reject the executive order to close IMLS and to restore its funding.”](#) That same day, the Administration terminated the National Museum and Library Services Board just as states reported receiving received written notification that their [IMLS grants were cancelled](#).

Ramiro Salazar, an IMLS board member prior to its dissolution tells *LJ*, “As far as I know, there was no communication in terms of the plan [for staff]. No communication to the board regarding our role or status.” [ALA President Cindy Hohl made the following statement](#): “Withdrawing library grants is a callous move at any time, but downright cruel at a time when it’s getting harder for many Americans to make ends meet—most of all, in small and rural communities.”

Updated April 7, 2025

IMLS

advocacy

lawsuit

