

POLITICS

# AGs, including Tong, sue Trump over agency closures



by Mark Pazniokas  
April 4, 2025 @ 4:47 pm



Attorney General William Tong responding to Trump's early round of executive orders in January. CREDIT: MARK PAZNIOKAS / CTMIRROR.ORG

For the second time in less than 24 hours, Attorney General William Tong joined a coalition of attorneys general Friday in suing the Trump administration, this time to

stop the dismantling of federal agencies that mediate labor disputes and support public libraries, museums and minority-owned businesses.

“We are back in court yet again today to block the latest in this never-ending torrent of illegal attacks on our families and workers,” Tong said in a statement.

The lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court in Rhode Island challenges a portion of an executive order destroying seven federal agencies, including three mandated by Congress: the Institute of Museum and Library Services; the Minority Business Development Agency and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

In a terse executive order signed March 14, Trump wrote, “This order continues the reduction in the elements of the Federal bureaucracy that the President has determined are unnecessary.”

The order was the latest attempt to dismantle the federal bureaucracy in defiance of Congress, the attorneys general say in the lawsuit.

“The Administration cannot dismantle federal agencies in this way. The Closure Order and the actions that Defendants have taken to implement it are illegal several times over,” the suit states.

The suit challenges only the dismantling of the three agencies mandated by Congress. The other four are the United States Agency for Global Media, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in the Smithsonian Institution, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, and the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund.

“We had to sue to stop Trump from defunding our schools and cancer cures, from defunding energy assistance and vaccines, from defunding disaster relief and the police. Now, we have to sue again to stop him from defunding summer reading programs and audiobooks for disabled veterans,” Tong said.

The Connecticut State Library receives \$2.2 million in annual funding from IMLS, providing support for early literacy and summer reading, and access to eBooks and audiobooks, among other programs, Tong said.

Connecticut is one of 20 states listed as plaintiffs in the suit, the 10th that Tong has joined in opposition to Trump.

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