



U.S. NEWS APRIL 7, 2025 / 11:48 PM

Trump admin. sued over dismantling of Institute of Museum and Library Services

By [Darryl Coote](#)



Protesters march down Fifth Avenue outside of the New York Public Library at the "Hands Off New York City Fights Back Rally" on Saturday, in New York City. On Monday, a lawsuit was filed seeking to stop the Trump administration from dismantling the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Photo by Peter Foley/UPI | [License Photo](#)

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April 7 (UPI) -- Unions representing libraries, librarians and federal workers sued the Trump administration on Monday to stop its dismantling of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, as they accused the federal government of usurping Congress's power.

The IMLS is a little-known independent agency of the federal government that offers grants to libraries and museums across the country. It also conducts research and develops policies. Congress, which created the agency in 1996, appropriated \$294.8 million to IMLS through Sept. 30.

Last month, President [Donald Trump](#) signed an executive order calling the IMLS, as well as a handful of other independent agencies, "unnecessary" and directed for it to be "eliminated to the maximum extent."

Since then, the Department of Government efficiency, a temporary organization, sent the vast majority of IMLS' 75-member workforce [termination letters](#) and canceled statutory grants to several state libraries.

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[The lawsuit](#) filed Monday by Democracy Forward on behalf of the American Library Association and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, accuses the Trump administration of governmental overreach, saying the IMLS was created by Congress, which is the only entity that can lawfully dismantle it.

"It is only a matter of time before defendants cancel en masse IMLS grants that fund activities at libraries across the country," the lawsuit states. "Even if grants are not canceled, the severely reduced workforce will not be able to effectively and timely process grant payments and applications."

According to the lawsuit, without grant funding or IMLS staff, local and state libraries will suffer irreparable harm as they will not be able to pay vendors or staff. The cuts and reduction in staff will also impact IMLS' ability to provide day-to-day services and advice to libraries across the country.

"Defendants took these actions to dismantle IMLS, and they were taken without congressional authorization. Congress is the only entity that may lawfully dismantle the agency, not the President and certainly not DOGE," it states.

Since returning to the White House on Jan. 20, Trump has sought to reduce the size of the federal government while

consolidating what remains under him. [Dozens of lawsuits](#) have been filed to stop the mass firings and dismantling of federal agencies by DOGE.

The lawsuit filed Monday seeks a preliminary injunction, forcing the Trump administration to reverse the actions it has already taken against IMLS and to stop further dissolution of the agency.

"Libraries are vital for people and communities across our nation. Attacking libraries and those who ensure the continuity of their services is yet another move by the Trump administration that does nothing to make Americans' lives better or easier," Skye Perryman, president and CEO of Democracy Forward, said in [a statement](#).

"Reducing IMLS workforce would undermine the agency's ability to faithfully execute its legal obligation and harm the operations of libraries."

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