

Local Politics

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WA AG sues Trump over dismantling of libraries agency

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The Washington State Library in Tumwater. Earlier this week, the Washington state librarian was notified that \$4 million in funding that had been awarded to the state library was being terminated. (Erika Schultz / The Seattle Times, 2023)



By **David Gutman**

Seattle Times staff reporter

Washington Attorney General Nick Brown joined 20 other states Friday in suing the Trump administration to block the dismantling of federal agencies that support libraries, museums, workers and minority owned businesses.

[The lawsuit](#), filed in federal district court in Rhode Island, seeks to stall a Trump executive order that called for the dismantling of seven federal agencies. Three of those agencies have since gutted every one of their operations, the lawsuit says.

“The Administration cannot dismantle federal agencies in this way,” the lawsuit says, calling Trump’s executive order “illegal several times over.”

“By stripping these agencies well past the studs, the Administration has flouted Congress’s directives,” the lawsuit says. “All of the agencies subject to the Closure Order were established by Congress and given a detailed set of statutory duties.”

The Institute of Museum and Library Services supports public libraries and museums through grants, research and policy development.

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service works to peacefully resolve labor disputes.

The Minority Business Development Agency provides financial assistance to promote minority owned businesses.

All three have shed the vast majority of their staff and are no longer performing the duties that they are prescribed by law to perform, the lawsuit says.

Trump’s executive order says the agencies are being stripped to the bone as part of efforts to cut “elements of the Federal bureaucracy that the President has determined are unnecessary.”

“Trump claims he’s carving up wasteful spending, but in reality he’s illegally gutting popular programs that support people with limited resources in our towns and cities,” Brown said in a prepared statement.

According to the lawsuit, the libraries agency gave \$180 million in grants to libraries last year. Earlier this week, the agency sent a letter to the Washington state librarian saying that \$4 million in funding that had been awarded to the state library was being terminated because it was “inconsistent” with agency priorities.

Trump lawsuit tracker

WA legal challenges to the president's orders

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- [WA AG sues Trump over dismantling of libraries agency](#)
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The grant was to support literacy and reading programs, books for prisons, lifelong learning programs and the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library.

Funding from the agency pays the salaries of 32 state library employees in Washington, the lawsuit says.

This is [one of 11 lawsuits Brown has filed](#) or joined against the Trump administration, and the third just on Friday. He has won preliminary victories in six of those lawsuits.

David Gutman: 206-464-2926 or dgutman@seattletimes.com.

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