



Subscribe

Flash Sale! Unlimited Digital Access - \$5 for the first month

POLITICS

One big overdue fee: AG Campbell sues Trump admin over library cuts, including \$3.6M for Mass.

Updated: Apr. 04, 2025, 4:39 p.m. | Published: Apr. 04, 2025, 4:38 p.m.



Boston Public Library as seen from Dartmouth Street in Boston, Mass. Nicole Simmons/MassLive



By [John L. Micek | jmicek@masslive.com](mailto:jmicek@masslive.com)

So this is what it sounds like when 20 state attorneys general “shush” you.

Massachusetts Attorney General Andrea J. Campbell took the Trump administration to court on Friday to block the White House’s efforts to dismantle the federal agency that provides funding and support for public libraries and museums nationwide.

The lawsuit, [filed in U.S. District Court in Rhode Island](#), names President Donald Trump and a host of administration officials as defendants.

The Republican [signed an executive order](#) last month dismantling the federal agencies that collectively provide hundreds of millions of dollars for library and museum programming in every state.

As a result, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) – one of the targeted agencies – placed nearly all of its staff on administrative leave and said it would cut hundreds of grants for state libraries and museums.

The IMLS said it awarded [\\$266 million](#) in grants and research last year, [NPR reported](#).

That includes the Bay State, which gets \$3.6 million in federal funding for library services, funneled through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, [WBUR-FM reported](#).

“From the Berkshires to Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is home to some of the best public libraries and museums in the country that employ residents, provide educational opportunities and resources, and drive our creative economy,” Campbell said in a statement.

Local libraries mostly depend on property taxes for their funding. Nonetheless, they depend on federal money to pay for such statewide services as databases and e-books, WBUR-FM reported.

Without that money, libraries couldn’t afford such services on their own, and the state could not make up the difference, the station reported.

The Elon Musk-helmed Department of Government Efficiency [paid a visit to](#) the Institute of Museum and Library Services two weeks ago, installing a new director, who said he planned to “[steer] this organization in lockstep,” with the administration’s cost-cutting

measures.

“It is an honor to be directed by President Trump to lead this important organization in its mission to advance, support, and empower America’s museums and libraries, which stand as cornerstones of learning and culture in our society. I am committed to steering this organization in lockstep with this administration to enhance efficiency and foster innovation,” the agency’s acting director, Keith E. Sonderling, [said in a statement](#).

Sonderling said he would “revitalize” the agency and “restore focus on patriotism, ensuring we preserve our country’s core values, promote American exceptionalism, and cultivate love of country in future generations.”

On Friday, Campbell said she and her colleagues “once again have to hold the Trump administration accountable for unlawful actions directed at our economy and cultural institutions.”

The legal action also seeks to halt the White House’s efforts to dismantle agencies — the Minority Business Development Agency, and Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, which promotes peaceful resolution of labor disputes.

In their court filing, Campbell and her colleagues argued that the executive order violates federal law and the U.S. Constitution by “eliminating the programs of agencies without any regard for the laws and regulations that govern each source of federal funding.

Trump cannot “decide to unilaterally override laws governing federal spending, and that this Executive Order unconstitutionally overrides Congress’s power to decide how federal funds are spent,” the coalition of attorneys general said in their joint statement.

Campbell was joined in the legal action by attorneys general from New York, Rhode Island, and Hawaii, who are leading it, in addition to the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin.

MORE POLITICAL NEWS

Harvard donations spike after taking stance against Trump demands

Trump admin letter to Harvard sent in error, sparking battle

How deportations are shaping Trump’s approval ratings according to polls

Anybody who drives a gas-fueled vehicle knows Trump was lying about gas prices

Is Harvard's resistance to Trump igniting a broader movement across higher ed?

If you purchase a product or register for an account through a link on our site, we may receive compensation. By using this site, you consent to our [User Agreement](#) and agree that your clicks, interactions, and personal information may be collected, recorded, and/or stored by us and social media and other third-party partners in accordance with our [Privacy Policy](#).



▼ Contact Us

[Contact MassLive](#)

[Contact The Republican](#)

▼ Subscriptions

[MassLive.com](#)

[Newsletters](#)

[Breaking news push alerts](#)

[The Republican](#)

[E-edition Login](#)

[Subscriptions and Circulation](#)

▼ MassLive Media

[About MassLive Media](#)

[Advertise with us](#)

[Sponsor Content](#)

[Accessibility Statement](#)

▼ Follow Us

[Facebook](#)

[Worcester Facebook](#)

[Red Sox Facebook](#)

[Patriots Facebook](#)

[Bruins Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[YouTube](#)

[HS Sports Twitter](#)

[Sports Twitter](#)

[Instagram](#)

[HS Sports Instagram](#)

[RSS](#)

▼ MassLive.com Sections

[News](#)

[Sports](#)

[Entertainment](#)

[Politics](#)

[Opinion](#)

[High School Sports](#)

[Betting](#)

[Living](#)

[Real Estate](#)

[Obituaries](#)

[Classifieds](#)

[Autos](#)

[Jobs](#)

▼ **More on MassLive.com**

[Careers at MassLive](#)

[Archives](#)

[Community rules](#)

[The Republican Archives](#)

[The Republican Special Sections](#)

[Place an ad](#)

| [Privacy Policy](#) | [User Agreement](#) | [Ad Choices](#)

ADVANCELOCAL

Use of and/or registration on any portion of this site constitutes acceptance of our [User Agreement](#), (updated 8/1/2024) and acknowledgement of our [Privacy Policy](#), and [Your Privacy Choices and Rights](#) (updated 1/1/2025).

© 2025 Advance Local Media LLC. All rights reserved ([About Us](#)).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of Advance Local.

[Community Rules](#) apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site.

YouTube's privacy policy is available [here](#) and **YouTube's terms of service** is available [here](#).

[Ad Choices](#)