



Statement from Senator Mary Kunesh Condemning Trump Administration's Attacks on Public Libraries and Museums

by Senator Mary Kunesh / April 2, 2025

ST. PAUL, Minn. — On Monday, March 31, [it was reported](#) that the Trump Administration's Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) has placed its entire staff on administrative leave. This comes as a result of a [March 14th executive order from President Trump](#) to terminate the functioning of a half dozen federal agencies.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is an independent federal agency that provides funding for libraries and museums across the United States. Though public libraries are primarily funded by city and county taxes, the IMLS awarded \$266 million in 2024 to help fund staff, maintenance and new programming. The elimination of staff means the agency will not be able to allocate funding, certainly leading to the ceasing of programs and services everywhere.

In 2024, [Minnesota received over \\$4.7 million](#) from the IMLS. Some past recipients of federal dollars include:

- Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning (Grants to state libraries)
- Science Museum of Minnesota
- Walker Art Center
- Goldstein Museum of Design
- History Center of Olmsted County
- Ramsey County Historical Society
- Weisman Art Museum

Chair of the Senate Education Finance Committee and former educator, **Senator Mary Kunesh (DFL-New Brighton)** released the following statement in response to this action by the Trump administration:

“Defunding our public libraries and museums to pay for tax cuts for the ultra wealthy – that’s despicable. Our public libraries and museums are essential to the functioning of our society. Without free and open access to knowledge and information, our students cannot satisfy their curious young minds and community members will lose access to free, invaluable resources. Whether it’s the pages of a book, fossils at the Science Museum, the tornado room at the History Center, or interactive exhibits at the Children’s Museum – it’s impossible to put a monetary value on our libraries and museums.

“Through their mass firings of public servants at the Department of Education, attempts to censor and whitewash history curricula, and attacks on our libraries and museums, Donald Trump and Elon Musk have made their priorities incredibly clear, and it’s definitely not the education of our young people. We must all stand up against their corrupt, chaotic and cruel agenda.”

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[Senator Mary Kunesch](#)



Senate District 39

Mary K. Kunesch represents Senate District 39, which covers the communities of St. Anthony Village, New Brighton, Hilltop, Columbia Heights, Fridley, and a portion of Spring Lake Park.

[Learn more about Sen. Kunesch.](#)

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