



To: Kaukauna Public Library Board of Trustees

From: Library Director Ashley Thiem-Menning

Date: 3/18/25

Re: Executive Order regarding Institute of Museums & Library Services

On March 14, the President of the United States issued an Executive Order regarding the Institute of Museum & Library Services (IMLS).

It is unclear at this time what the impact to libraries will be on a national and local level. I wanted to address this because patrons have been asking questions about what this means for their library at our service desk because they are hearing about it in the news.

OWLS Director Bradley Ships did reach out to OWLS Library Directors, stating that System Directors met with DPI to discuss the Executive Order. Their understanding from the meeting is that in the short term, there will be little impact to Wisconsin public libraries. DPI received word from IMLS that they expect to send Wisconsin's full annual award in April. The potentially serious impacts could be in the future. In October, Congress will vote on whether to re-authorize the IMLS, and if they do not, state grants to libraries would not come through in April 2026. Federal funding through IMLS is important to public libraries in Wisconsin in a variety of ways.

The Wisconsin Library Association released this information to us:

"While we wait for the IMLS to release its plan of compliance with the order, WLA leadership and its Library Development & Legislation (LD&L) Committee are communicating with our partners at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, leaders within the 15 public library systems around the state, other state library associations, and the American Library Association. We will share more information as it becomes available to us."

I will keep you posted as we learn more about what this might mean to Wisconsin libraries. There is currently no direct impact to our library at this time. Historically, we have been (as a library system) awarded LSTA funds, which are federal and come from the IMLS under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). The IMLS, Grants to States program, is the largest source of federal funding support for library services in the United States. LSTA grants are awarded for a variety of things in public libraries, including technology and early literacy efforts, which may not be fiscally feasible for libraries in their regular operating budget. There are few large-scale grants available to public libraries in the United States outside of the IMLS. Wisconsin receives roughly three million dollars annually for the Grants to States program.