

# Building Opportunity: Why IMLS Funding Matters

by [KplBrandi](#) March 21, 2025

March 21, 2025 - The Kenosha Public Library (KPL), a 2021 nominee for the prestigious Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) National Medal, is urging community members to take action following an executive order that threatens to dismantle the only federal agency dedicated to supporting museums and libraries across the nation. IMLS provides crucial funding that enhances library services, fosters innovation, and ensures access to essential resources for communities across all 50 states. Without this funding, public libraries, including KPL, and cultural institutions nationwide risk losing critical programs and services that positively impact millions of Americans.

Kenosha residents are encouraged to contact their elected officials to voice their support for continued federal investment in libraries and museums.

KPL has a long history of leveraging IMLS funding to expand services that meet the evolving needs of the Kenosha community. National Leadership Grants and state-level support through IMLS have enabled the library to enhance digital literacy initiatives, provide inclusive programming, and expand access to technology and educational resources.

"IMLS funding has allowed Kenosha Public Library to create and sustain innovative programs that directly benefit our community," said Brandi Cummings, Interim Library Director. "From early literacy initiatives to cutting-edge digital resources, this funding ensures that KPL can continue serving as a vital hub for learning and connection. In the last decade, KPL has received over \$350,000 in funding from IMLS for projects and initiatives that have met the needs of our vibrant community."

Beyond Kenosha, IMLS grants have supported libraries, museums, and cultural institutions across Wisconsin, funding everything from historical preservation to STEM education initiatives. Over the past 15 years, the agency has awarded an average of 18 grants annually to Wisconsin institutions, totaling nearly \$70 million in support. This funding has generated an estimated \$350 million in tax revenue for the state, highlighting the immense return on investment that federal support provides.

Despite accounting for just 0.0046% of the federal budget, IMLS funding has an outsized impact. Museums and libraries contribute an estimated \$50 billion to the U.S. economy annually and support more than 726,000 jobs nationwide. Public support for these institutions remains overwhelmingly strong, with 96% of Americans advocating for maintaining or increasing federal funding.

As a leader in public service and a recognized IMLS National Medal nominee, Kenosha Public Library remains committed to fostering knowledge, creativity, and community engagement. Now is the time to stand together in support of the libraries and museums that enrich our lives. Learn more about how you can help by exploring the resources below:

Learn More:

- [Full text of Executive Order](#)
- [About IMLS](#)
- [What Does IMLS Do?](#)
- [ALA FAQs on the Executive Order](#)

Want to contact your representative and thank them for supporting libraries and museums throughout Wisconsin? Find their information below:

Wisconsin U.S. Senators

[Senator Ron Johnson](#)

[Senator Tammy Baldwin](#)

Wisconsin Congressional Delegation ([Find your representative](#))

1st District - [Bryan Steil](#)

2nd District - [Mark Pocan](#)

3rd District - [Derrick Van Orden](#)

4th District - [Gwen Moore](#)

5th District - [Scott Fitzgerald](#)

6th District - [Glenn Grothman](#)

7th District - [Thomas Tiffany](#)

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