

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 18, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President  
United States of America  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

We write to express our concern regarding your administration's actions against the arts and humanities community. Specifically, we are concerned regarding executive actions that have led to the termination of federal employees, as well as rescission and cancellation of grants and programs that were sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Many of these programs and grants go towards museums, historic sites, places of higher education, libraries and nonprofits to educate Americans on the vast culture of our great country. Organizations across the country have reported that grants they rely on to fund their programs have been immediately terminated, often without reason. Finally, we are concerned that funding originally meant for NEH and NEA grant recipients are now going towards your "Garden of Heroes" project, estimated to cost approximately \$34 million.

In March, you ordered NEH Chair Shelly Lowe, the first Native American to hold the position, to step down, effectively crippling the organization. You have not nominated or endorsed a replacement for this position, besides designating an acting chair to serve in the interim, bringing into question your administration's long-term goals with the NEH and its critical mission. Similar events have occurred at both the NEA and the IMLS, where their future too has been called into question.

On Tuesday, April 1, almost all the employees at the NEH received an email stating that they were on paid administrative leave effective immediately. On Thursday, April 10, approximately 65% of NEH staff received termination notices, effectively crippling the agency. Additionally, NEH grants that were allotted during the Biden administration that had not yet gone into effect were immediately cancelled. Recently, federal grants held by museums, libraries and research centers provided by the IMLS that go towards funding staff trainings, building of museums and research grants were terminated. Some of the grants and programs affected include:

- \$160 million distributed from IMLS to State Library Administrative Agencies (SLAAs) through the "Grants to States" program across all 50 states and territories, which help to fund local libraries and learning programs.
- A World War One (WWI) museum and war memorial in Kansas City, Missouri, digitization project of its nearly 2,000 documents from the era.
- A \$485,000 NEH grant to help produce a film titled *The People's Will*, which would shed light on the 1849 Astor Place Riot in New York.
- A \$500,000 NEH grant to help revitalize and restore Henry Ford's Model T plant in Detroit, Michigan.

As you can see, the NEH, NEA, and the IMLS are all critical institutions for the development of our communities and for American culture across the entire nation. These are independent agencies of the federal government that serve as a main source of funding for a variety of cultural institutions such as libraries, museums, theaters, and galleries; as well as for projects like humanities education and research. These institutions enrich learning experiences for our children, provide resources to bridge gaps in communities, and provide Americans with access to our nation's vast history and culture. They are important in informing generations of Americans about our past so we can have the proper wisdom and context to decide our future.

All Americans benefit from the services provided by these institutions, but your administration's actions will undoubtedly have harmful effects to the cultural and educational retention of our nation. We urge you to reconsider the actions taken by your administration towards the arts and humanities community, including the termination of federal employees and the cancellation of vital grants and programs, and urge that appropriated funds that were authorized by Congress continue to flow to their appropriate agency. We look forward to your response.

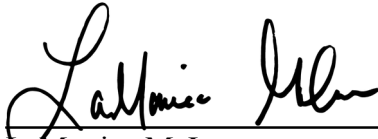
Sincerely,



Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress



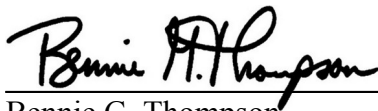
Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



LaMonica McIver  
Member of Congress



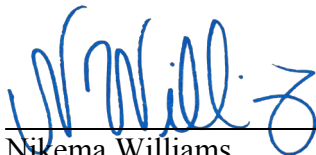
James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



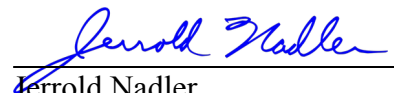
Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress



Valerie P. Foushee  
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress



Terrold Nadler  
Member of Congress

Ed Case

---

Ed Case  
Member of Congress

Delia C. Ramirez

---

Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress

Sarah Elfreth

---

Sarah Elfreth  
Member of Congress

Andre Carson

---

Andre Carson  
Member of Congress

Lateefah Simon

---

Lateefah Simon  
Member of Congress

Wesley Bell

---

Wesley Bell  
Member of Congress

Dan Goldman

---

Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer Jr.

---

Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress

Jared Huffman

---

Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress

John W. Mannion

---

John W. Mannion  
Member of Congress