



CHIEF OFFICERS OF STATE LIBRARY AGENCIES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COSLA Statement on White House's Proposed FY2019 Budget *Federal support of public libraries at risk.*

Lexington, Kentucky – The Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) express concern over the proposed elimination of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) in the White House's FY2019 budget released yesterday and call for lawmakers to remain firm in their dedication to providing critical support for libraries as vibrant, trusted institutions serving communities throughout the United States.

"With its reach into every public library in America and its intimate connections to state and local needs and issues, COSLA is unique in its understanding of the importance of federal funding in the provision of essential library services," notes Sandra Treadway, Librarian of Virginia and COSLA President. "Funding from IMLS has an impact on every individual using public library services in every state and territory in the U.S. Each state and territory identifies the most appropriate uses of funds from the IMLS Grants to States program, implementing services and activities to meet their communities' unique economic, education, civic, and demographic needs. The return on investment of these federal funds is substantial and enhanced by each state's matching contribution and local funding."

The innovations taking place in America's libraries today are also strengthened through IMLS discretionary grant programs. Through those programs libraries address real and immediate needs in their communities in areas such as early literacy, workforce and small business development, and instruction in emerging technologies. IMLS and COSLA leadership together encourage the development of new and effective provision of services, best practices, and set the stage for libraries to respond to the changing needs of the communities they serve.

America's libraries, at the heart of every community in every state, demonstrate a proud record of accomplishment that has benefited greatly from the financial support, research, and leadership provided by the IMLS. We encourage lawmakers to continue to build on the strength of this tradition by ensuring the continuation of a well-funded Institute of Museum and Library Services.

About the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA): COSLA is an independent organization of the chief officers of state and territorial agencies designated as the state library administrative agency and responsible for statewide library development. Its purpose is to provide leadership on issues of common concern and national interest; to further state library agency relationships with federal government and national organizations; and to initiate cooperative action for the improvement of library services to the people of the United States.

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