



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII STATE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM
'OIHANA HALE WAIHONA PUKE AUPUNI O KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
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March 19, 2025

AN OPEN LETTER TO HAWAI'I'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

Aloha e Senators Schatz and Hirono and Representatives Case and Tokuda,

On Friday, March 14, 2025, a White House executive order was issued that would significantly reduce or eliminate the staff and programs at the Institute of Museum & Library Services (IMLS).

The resulting loss of these program services and funding would have a direct adverse impact on many people in Hawai'i and would disproportionately harm children, seniors, job seekers, and students who rely on an array of free library services.

Hawai'i receives about \$1.5M each year through the Library Services and Technology Act – Grants to States Program. Hawai'i's public libraries use these funds to ensure access to the internet, technology, collections, and digital and physical resources that support reading and learning. This includes ebooks, audio books and databases for research and learning.

Our keiki use library equipment and resources to gain skills needed for learning. Our kupuna need these resources to access government resources and manage general day-to-day life activities in the digital world, such as shopping and medical appointments. In addition, our public libraries provide free access to learning a new language, legal forms, health information, preparing for educational and professional tests, and databases that support student homework.

In Hawai'i, public libraries are often the only government resource in many of our rural communities, especially on the neighbor islands. Without IMLS, rural and underserved libraries will lose access to critical resources, and cultural institutions will struggle to preserve our history.

Hawai'i residents see their libraries as free, welcoming, safe, and cherished places. They appreciate the role libraries play in providing access to information, culture, and ideas that connect our past to the present and future.

I urge you to publicly oppose the proposed cuts and support legislation to protect IMLS services and funding. It is amazing that such a small federal investment for IMLS leverages millions of state and local dollars to build programs and services that continue to help our community innovate and grow. Please stand with our nation's libraries and museums by fighting for this indispensable institution.

With Aloha,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stacey A. Aldrich".

Stacey A. Aldrich, State Librarian
State of Hawai'i