

Speaking with a Unified Voice: Talking Points for Advocacy for Michigan Libraries from the Michigan Library Association and The Library Cooperatives of Michigan.

This is not a press release.

For twenty years Michigan residents have enjoyed use of the **Michigan Electronic Library (MeL)**. This critical library service and adjacent programs are about to be eliminated due to a federal Executive Order.

- In 2024, Michigan Libraries lent over one **million** books and other materials that are not locally available through a service called MelCat, funded primarily by federal dollars.
- Through MeL, students and other residents last year accessed over **19 million** electronic articles, journals and other online resources to do homework, research, prepare for tests, and so much more.
- Residents benefited from MeL's authoritative sources on education, medicine, business, and history, among other topics to make informed decisions.
- For every federal dollar spent, \$27.00 was returned to Michigan communities through these services.

More Information

The Executive Order signed by President Trump on March 14, 2025, *Continuing the Reduction of the Federal Bureaucracy*, directs the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to:

- 1) eliminate non-statutory programs
- 2) reduce its functions and personnel to the minimum required by law
- 3) directs the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to reject funding requests from IMLS "except insofar as necessary to effectuate an expected termination"

While the Executive Order (EO) does not directly eliminate the agency, as that would take an act of Congress, the EO aims to move as far toward eliminating the agency as possible.

MeL and MelCat provide interlibrary loan and resource-sharing services, allowing libraries across Michigan to lend and share materials. In 2024, over 1 million items were loaned to patrons throughout the state. Michigan libraries could also lose access to MeL funded databases, where over 19.2 million trusted articles and journals were accessed in 2024.

Michigan receives federal funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The Michigan eLibrary (mel.org) is funded by IMLS. A recent Executive Order from President Trump seeks to do away with IMLS. If IMLS is dismantled, all of Michigan will be greatly

affected if the Michigan eLibrary goes away. MeL is the 24/7 library available throughout the state.

While the majority of yearly revenue for local public libraries in Michigan comes from local property taxes, the most significant impact of the potential loss of IMLS funding could be the potential loss of the Michigan Electronic Library (MeL) and MeLCat, which may cease to exist if this funding is eliminated.

MLA is urging President Trump to rescind the EO targeting IMLS and imploring Congress to continue fully funding IMLS at levels that protect both discretionary and statutory programs.

What can we do?

- Libraries may share information about services, government actions, and potential effects of the loss of funding.
- Libraries and others can raise awareness in the media and communities.
- Individuals may contact federal legislators to voice your opinion.
- Anyone can educate elected officials on the impact federal dollars to libraries have on our communities and library constituents.