



NEWS RELEASE
North Olympic Library System
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: April 15, 2025
Contact: Noah Glaude, Executive Director
360-417-8500 x7717; NGlaude@nols.org
Re: Threats to IMLS Funding Impacts Libraries
Attachments: *NOLS-Tech-Help-Program.jpg*; *NOLS-Tabletop-Game-Night.jpg*

Executive Order Threatens the Future of IMLS

On March 14, President Trump issued an executive order directing the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to significantly reduce its operations. The order calls for the elimination of non-statutory components of the agency. While it was not [immediately certain](#) what this directive would entail, in recent weeks IMLS staff have been placed on administrative leave and previously awarded grants have been terminated.

The North Olympic Library System (NOLS) is [funded](#) primarily through Clallam County property taxes, but a loss of federal funding and the IMLS will still have a big impact on local library services, explained NOLS Executive Director Noah Glaude. “NOLS patrons check out hundreds of thousands of eBooks every year, but the state consortium that is used to lend eBooks could be reduced or eliminated without IMLS funding. Blind and low vision Clallam County residents may have reduced access to books in braille, which get mailed to them by the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library. Without grants and technical support, NOLS won’t be able to digitally preserve local history resources, such as the [Bert Kellogg Photo Collection](#) that was digitized using IMLS funding, and patrons could lose access to research databases. NOLS does not have the capacity to cover the elimination of this funding and

support provided by IMLS, so it is unknown at this time how the loss of services will be mitigated for our community and over 30,000 active card holders,” said Glaude.

The Role of IMLS in Washington

Since its establishment in 1996, IMLS has been a crucial source of federal funding for libraries and museums across the United States. Although funding for libraries represents only around 0.003% of the annual federal budget, IMLS supports a variety of programs through grants and financial assistance.

Washington State Librarian Sara Jones said on [a recent podcast episode](#) that IMLS funding is "bar none, one of the most effective and efficient uses of money that I've ever seen... You have to know what your project outcomes are going to be before you're given a penny, and then you're asked: Did you meet those project outcomes or exceed them?"

In fiscal year 2024 the Washington State Library [received approximately \\$3.9 million](#) as part of the “Grants to States” program to support:

- Libraries for the blind and print disabled, including the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library
- Institutional Library Services providing resources and support to incarcerated and hospitalized patrons
- Broadband access to rural and underserved communities
- Access to eBooks and other online resources, including the Washington Anytime Library accessed via the popular Libby app
- Workforce development resource to support job seekers and employers
- Training for staff who provide Early Learning and Youth programming
- Resources for Tribal Libraries including digitization assistance
- Professional development and continuing education for library staff

The Washington State Library has [gathered additional information](#) about the impact of federal funding on libraries across the state.

What Can NOLS Patrons Expect?

The North Olympic Library System (NOLS) is [funded](#) primarily through property taxes with supplemental funding from timber revenues and community donations. Additionally, NOLS receives a substantial discount of 80% on internet and network equipment costs through a federal program known as E-Rate, which is based on the free and reduced lunch levels (a key poverty indicator) in Clallam County. Our communities benefit from programs supported by IMLS administered by the Washington State Library (WSL) and through federal funds such as the E-Rate program.

NOLS is a member of the Washington Digital Library Consortium (WDLC), which provides 40 library systems in the state with access to eBooks and eAudiobooks through the [Washington Anytime Library](#) and the popular Libby app. In 2025, NOLS patrons have been borrowing nearly 20,000 eBooks, eAudiobooks and eMagazines every month. The consortium lends over 1 million items annually. Funding for the service may be stable through 2025, but federal IMLS funding to cover a position to administer the WDLC and help cover the rising prices for eBook licensing has been cut, threatening the existence of the consortium.

Washington Talking Book and Braille Library (WTBBL) is another IMLS-funded resource to which NOLS staff refer blind and low-vision patrons from Clallam County. The WTBBL provides library services statewide, at the library and by mail, to any Washington resident unable to read standard print material due to blindness, visual impairment, DeafBlindness, physical disability, or reading disability.

Additionally, a variety of research and reference databases, local history resources, digital newspapers, workforce development tools, and programming for all ages are utilized by NOLS patrons and are either fully funded or subsidized by the Washington State Library using IMLS grants. The elimination of IMLS funding and other federal funding puts the availability of these programs and services at risk.

Advocating for IMLS and Library Funding

Many rural and underserved communities in Washington and around the country rely on federal support to maintain important library services. Without IMLS grants and other federal funding, libraries may struggle to sustain programs that provide critical resources to their patrons.

Community members who wish to express support for IMLS can find suggestions at the [EveryLibrary Institute](#), a non-profit organization that supports library funding across the United States. Additionally, the American Library Association (ALA) has launched the "[Show Up for Our Libraries](#)" campaign to mobilize public support and emphasize the importance of continued investment in libraries and museums.

The future of IMLS remains uncertain, and community advocacy will be essential in ensuring that libraries can continue to provide vital services to the public.

When asked what library users can do to support IMLS and library funding Washington State Librarian Jones said, "People's voices matter. When you call your Congress people and your state legislators and tell them, 'Hey, this matters to me, it's important' - that works. It really does work."



Librarian Corrina Desmarais teaches NOLS patrons how to access free eBooks with their library cards.



Utilizing funding from IMLS, tabletop game programming is offered at NOLS.

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