



INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES (IMLS)

Requests:

- We urge Congress to support \$50 million for the Institute of Museum and Library Services Office of Museum Services for FY11 – a \$15 million increase over FY10.
- Specifically, we urge **House** Members to sign the **Tonko-Slaughter-Lance Dear Colleague Letter** requesting \$50 million for the IMLS Office of Museum Services.
- We urge **Senate** Members to sign the **Gillibrand Dear Colleague Letter** requesting \$50 million for the IMLS Office of Museum Services.
- We urge Congress to pass a bill [not yet introduced] to reauthorize the Office of Museum Services (OMS) at \$95 million incrementally over the 5-year reauthorization period by strengthening existing national programs, initiating state needs assessments; devoting new funding to conservation endowment grants, traveling exhibitions and a new program to help smaller museums compete more effectively for federal grants; and establishing a federal-state partnership that dedicates funding to a state grant program for museums.

Introduction:

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is the primary federal agency responsible for supporting the nation's 17,500+ museums. The IMLS was established in 1996 by the Museum and Library Services Act of 1996, and reauthorized in 2003 by a vote of 416 – 2 (PL 108-081). Its Office of Museum Services (OMS) awards grants to museums to support them as institutions of learning and exploration, and keepers of our cultural, historical, and scientific heritages. OMS supports all types of museums – including aquariums, arboretums, art museums, botanical gardens, children's museums, historic sites, history museums, military museums, natural history museums, nature centers, planetariums, science & technology centers, zoological parks, and other specialty museums. Grants are awarded in a number of areas including educational programming, professional development, and collections management, among others.

Current funding has allowed the agency to fund only a small fraction of all highly-rated grant applications. Despite this funding shortfall, museum attendance has increased, collections are subject to increasing risk, and museum staff members need professional development in conservation, education, and technology. The educational services museums provide to schools and communities are in greater demand than ever.

As a result, museums need and deserve more federal support – both to strengthen existing national programs at IMLS and to pursue a new strategy to support museums directly at the state level. Only a small percentage of America's 17,500+ museums receive federal funding of any kind.

While funding occurs through the annual appropriations process, a five-year reauthorization of the agency was due to occur by September 2009. The museum community worked collaboratively to develop a package of reforms that are being incorporated into a bill being drafted by Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI).

Talking Points:

- Americans view museums as some of the most important resources for educating our children and as some of the most trustworthy sources of objective information. This credibility stems, in part, from the solid foundation research and collections provide for exhibitions and educational programs.
- Museums are not only valuable educational resources for our children, but for individuals of all ages and backgrounds. Museums stimulate and promote lifelong learning.
- Museums spend more than \$2.2 billion annually on educational programming (American Association of Museums *2009 Museum Financial Information*).
- Teachers, students, and researchers are benefiting from access to trustworthy information through online collections and exhibits, although most museums need more help in developing their digital collections to meet this need. This is especially important when geographical distances prevent travel to a wide range of museums.
- Museums receive more than 90 million visits each year from students in school groups (IMLS study).
- Museums tailor educational programs in coordination with state and local curriculum standards in math, science, art, literacy, economics and financial literacy, language arts, history, civics and government, geography, and social studies (IMLS study).
- Each year, museums provide more than 18 million instructional hours for educational programs such as guided tours for students, staff visits to schools, school outreach through science vans and other traveling exhibits, and professional development for teachers (IMLS study).
- The 2005 *Heritage Health Index* concluded that immediate action is needed to prevent the loss of 190 million artifacts that are in need of conservation treatment.
 - 59% have collections damaged by light
 - 56% have insufficient security to protect their collections
 - 80% do not have an emergency plan that includes collections
 - 71% need additional training and expertise for staff caring for collections
 - only 13% have access to endowment funds for preservation
- Collections – including artifacts and specimens – play a vital role in the preservation and interpretation of cultural and natural heritage.

Status:

- The Administration's FY11 budget requested \$35 million – level funding – for the Office of Museum Services. Congress will determine funding for the agency through the annual Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill.
- Senators Jack Reed (D-RI), Tom Harkin (D-IA), Michael Enzi (R-WY), and Richard Burr (R-NC) are in the process of drafting a bipartisan IMLS Reauthorization bill.

Funding History:

IMLS Office of Museum Services

	FY 2004 enacted	FY 2005 enacted	FY 2006 enacted	FY 2007 enacted	FY 2008 enacted	FY 2009 enacted	FY 2010 enacted	FY 2011 proposed
Appropriation <i>(in millions)</i>	\$27.3	\$30.3	\$31.8	\$31.8	\$31.7	\$35.0	\$35.2	\$35.2