

ALA American Library Association

January 17, 2024

Mr. Crosby Kemper III
Director
Institute of Museum and Library Services
955 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W. #4000
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Director Kemper,

On behalf of the American Library Association (ALA), I write to commemorate your four years of stewardship at the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). During one of the most challenging times in American history, your leadership provided a steady hand for libraries, guiding the national response for the nation's libraries through the COVID pandemic, emergency relief, and post-pandemic realities.

Libraries of all kinds are in a much stronger state thanks to the tireless work of IMLS during your tenure. You have become a strong voice of libraries within the federal government during your tenure, regularly working with many federal agencies as they develop policies that impact our members, particularly during the COVID pandemic and emergency relief. In addition, we applaud your work supporting libraries on the following activities:

- \$200 million for libraries through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, and IMLS quickly distributed \$178 million to state library administrative agencies. This emergency relief funding provided a lifeline for libraries when they were challenged to provide desperately needed services to communities.
- \$50 million for libraries through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) Act of 2021, and IMLS immediately disbursed \$30 million to state library administrative agencies.
- Implementation of an Information Literacy Taskforce to evaluate and facilitate the development of resources for communities addressing information literacy needs. The work of IMLS will help address challenges and lack of information literacies, including implications for financial, health, climate, safety, and civic engagement.
- Initiating efforts to assess the physical conditions of public library facilities as recommended by Congress. Your efforts will provide valuable data to public libraries in economically disadvantaged and under-served areas struggling to keep up with in-demand services often constrained by aging facilities.

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- Announcement of the partnership between IMLS and the Federal Communications Commission to promote broadband access. The Memorandum of Understanding to jointly promote public awareness of affordable broadband programs will have long-lasting implications for libraries and Americans.
- Continued growth of federal funding for the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), offering foundational and leadership resources to strengthen library services. The FY 2023 funding for LSTA at \$211 million has grown from \$197 million during your tenure. As libraries continue to demonstrate their value to communities across the nation, your leadership at IMLS helps affirm this library story.
- Greater recognition of the contributions of U.S. libraries in the U.S. Congress and Executive Branch through your efforts in engaging bipartisan officials and staff.

Congratulations on the completion of your formal term at IMLS. We are proud to have you at the helm of the only federal agency dedicated to telling and advancing the story of libraries. ALA looks forward to working with you in the coming months until a new director is in place.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Alan S. Inouye, Ph.D.
Interim Associate Executive Director
ALA Public Policy and Advocacy
Washington, D.C.

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