



April 23, 2025

Keith Sonderling
Acting Director
Institute of Museum and Library Services
955 L'Enfant Plaza SW #4000
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Mr. Sonderling,

The Library of Virginia Foundation submits this letter to formally appeal the recent decision regarding the April 8, 2025, termination notification of IMLS Grant ST-256898-OMS-24.

Grant ST-256898-OMS-24 was awarded to the Library Foundation on September 10, 2024, as part of the Save America's Treasures (SAT) program of the National Park Service (NPS). The total grant awarded by IMLS was \$172,828 with a required cost-share of \$173,029. The grant period was October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2027. The Library Foundation received notice that the grant was terminated based on the project, "no longer [being] consistent with the agency's priorities and no longer serves the interest of the United States and the IMLS Program."

The Library Foundation believes that Grant ST-256898-OMS-24 aligns with the goals and values of the Institute of Museums and Library Services and the National Park Service, and I would like to provide additional information for your consideration.

The "Legislative Petitions from Virginia Burned Record Counties (1776-1850)" grant project supports IMLS Strategic Goal #3, "Advance Collections Stewardship and Access" as well as strengthens the NPS SAT program representing "nationally significant historic properties and collections that convey our nation's rich heritage to future generations."

The project focuses on the conservation and digitization of 699 legislative petitions dating from 1776 to 1850 in Virginia. The documents identified are from locations known as "burned record counties," areas that experienced significant loss of their local court records due to various wars or courthouse fires. The items are the only primary legal sources that exist for these localities from the 1776–1850 period and are consulted by historians, genealogists and other researchers. Conservation of the original documents and digitization will allow researchers to access the material without further damage to the petitions.

This important project is part of a larger effort the Library is embarking on to commemorate the 250th Anniversary of American Independence. I kindly request a review of this grant application and hope for a positive reconsideration.

Sincerely,

R. Scott Dodson
Executive Director
Library of Virginia Foundation