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PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Brown Co-Leads Multistate Legal Effort to Restore Funding for Humanities Programs Across the Country

BALTIMORE, MD (July 3, 2025) – Attorney General Anthony G. Brown and a coalition of states are urging a federal court to stop the Trump administration from gutting federal support for public humanities programs that serve communities nationwide. The coalition filed an [amicus brief](#) backing a lawsuit that challenges the National Endowment for the Humanities’ (NEH) abrupt cancellation of critical support for state humanities councils.

“Defunding state humanities councils threatens to shut down vital programs that connect Marylanders to our history and culture, including programs that help thousands of our students every year to explore and understand our past,” **said Attorney General Brown**. “We’re filing this brief because the Trump administration cannot simply ignore the law and refuse to support these important educational programs that strengthen our communities by preserving our heritage.”

The NEH’s “Fed/State Partnership” program—funded every year since 1972—was designed by Congress to ensure every state has access to high-quality, community-based humanities programming. But earlier this year, the NEH abruptly and dramatically reduced support for state humanities councils, forcing the councils to cancel programs, furlough staff, and scale back or eliminate educational offerings.

The amicus brief, filed in the United States District Court for the District of Oregon, argues that the administration’s actions:

- Violate federal law by ignoring Congress’s statutory mandate to fund state humanities councils and by failing to follow required procedures for terminating grants.
- Overstep constitutional boundaries, infringing on Congress’s power of the purse and violating the separation of powers and the Take Care Clause.
- Cause irreparable harm to state councils as well as local organizations, schools, and libraries that depend on NEH funding to deliver programs in civic education, cultural heritage, history, literature, and more.

Maryland’s humanities council serves tens of thousands of Marylanders through grant-supported projects, festivals, digital engagement, and partnerships with Maryland Public Television and www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov

WYPR. In addition to sponsoring the Maryland Center for the Book and One Maryland One Book, Maryland Humanities joins with the Maryland State Department of Education to produce Maryland History Day, for which thousands of middle and high school students explore annually selected historical themes by creating original projects on a topic of their choice.

A hearing on the motion for preliminary injunction is scheduled for August 4 at 9 a.m. at the federal courthouse in Portland, Oregon.

Joining Attorney General Brown in filing the brief are the attorneys general of Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Michigan, Nevada, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Wisconsin, Vermont, and the District of Columbia.

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