

We thank the General Assembly for the \$11 million restoration to the public library subsidy for 2022-2023. While we are not fully restored to our 2008 funding level, we are asking for stability in library funding for the coming year.

Stable library funding is essential to maintain library services and access for communities.

- ✚ Please support stable funding for public libraries: Public Library Subsidy \$70.47 million, Library Services for the Visually Impaired & Disabled \$2.567 million, Library Access \$3.071 million, State Library \$2.466 million.
- ✚ We support the Governor's request to help small rural libraries with \$4.2 million in targeted funds for minor facility repairs and improvements.

Funding for public libraries varies widely by community.

- ✚ State aid only provides on average 15-18% of a public library's operational budget, is essential for library stability, and provides an incentive for local municipalities to fund libraries.
- ✚ Municipal funding has varied in recent years, with contributions reduced or at-risk for many.
- ✚ 85% of PA public libraries are non-profits who fundraise for up to 80% of their **annual operating** budgets.
- ✚ Expenses for electronic resources such as eBooks have risen dramatically (eBooks cost up to 5 times more than a hardback) and licenses for eBooks have to be repurchased every 2 years.
- ✚ Wages for non-profit public library staff remain low, resulting in high turnover of staff. Keeping the doors open for full hours due to a lack of staff has been challenging.

Libraries are the keystones of our communities!

- ✚ Professionally credentialed librarians are the core of providing reference, technology, programming, and technical services to our communities.
- ✚ Hours open to the community are mostly restored despite challenges to recruit and retain staff.
- ✚ Usage for access to public computers and Wi-Fi remains high and Wi-Fi is even used after open hours.
- ✚ Library staff assist patrons with support for Medicare enrollments, CHIP sign-up, Compass services, job searches, resume creation, and referrals to local social service organizations.
- ✚ All Pennsylvania residents can request an eResource card for access to eBooks, audiobooks, and databases such as newspapers and business profiles.

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