

means thousands of children were blocked from enjoying a thoroughly American tradition and fundamental right that is borrowing books from their community library.

SB 524 also provides greater support for libraries through investments in three critical programs:

- Increased support for State aid for libraries by \$0.40 per capita (from \$16.70 to \$17.10).
- Increased support for the State Library Resource Center by \$0.20 per capita that supports special collections and technical training for libraries across Maryland.
- Increased support for the Library Capital Grant Program from \$5 million to \$7.5 million annually (first increase since the Program was created in FY2008) that supports libraries across Maryland.

We have worked hand-in-hand with the libraries to make this the strongest bill possible. With that in mind, we will be submitting to this Committee amendments that make the following changes:

- Changing “books” to “materials” in the bill to encompass more materials that children may borrow from a library;
- Clarifying the terminology of “fine” or “fee” in the bill as “fees” are for the replacement of materials and “fines” are for late returns;
- Extending the implementation date to 2021 to ensure that our libraries receive the full benefit of the State funding increases and have time to make these administrative changes;
- Clarifying that “special collections” are not included in the fine prohibition; and,
- Enabling each respective library board of trustees to implement the bill.

The late Speaker Mike Busch is often remembered for his leadership in championing the quality of life of Maryland’s youth. He played a critical role in creating the Library Capital Grant Program in 2008 to better support these pillars of learning and public life. That fund has not been increased since its inception. This legislation serves as a fitting tribute to his legacy.

HB 1000 is the right policy and investment to help build lifelong library learners. I respectfully request a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric Ebersole", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Eric Ebersole