

Delegate Maggie McIntosh, Chairwoman  
House Appropriations Committee  
House Office Building -Room 121  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

28 January 2021

**RE: House Bill 436 Enoch Pratt Free Library – Operating Hours and Funding**  
**Position: Support**

Dear Chairwoman McIntosh and Members of the House Appropriations Committee,

I am the Chair of the Enoch Pratt Free Library Board of Trustees and Directors, and I am writing you in support of **House Bill 436- Enoch Pratt Library-Operating Hours and Funding**.

As the Board Chair, I can attest to the fact that the Pratt is a good steward of the State's funding resources given our dual role as the City of Baltimore's Library system and the designated State Library Resource Center. As you may be aware, this legislation dates back to January of 2016 when the Pratt Library made the courageous decision to remain open to the public after normal hours in the wake of the Freddie Gray unrest. That moment sparked a renewed recognition for the important role that the Pratt Library System plays as a vital resource for the community. Since that time, funding from this legislation has enabled Enoch Pratt Library branches to expand their hours to include evenings and weekends.

**Since library hours were expanded the Pratt has seen:**

- 25% increase in collection use
- 43% increase in Wi-Fi usage
- 10% increase in reference materials which supports educational studies
- 65% increase in social media followers

We urge you and your committee to support HB 436, to provide funding for expanded operating hours at the Pratt Library. Residents need our resources to thrive during COVID recovery.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Enoch Pratt Library and public libraries throughout Maryland.

Sincerely,



Mychelle Farmer, MD

Chair, Pratt Library Board of Trustees, Directors

cc: Heidi Daniel – CEO, Enoch Pratt Free Library  
Gordon Krabbe-COO, Enoch Pratt Free Library