



WASHINGTON COUNTY
FREE LIBRARY

Where People & Possibilities Meet

March 10, 2026

Chair Barnes and Vice Chair Kaiser
Appropriations Committee

Dear Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Kaiser and Committee members,

The Washington County Free Library strongly supports **HB660 – Public Libraries – State Library Resource Center - Funding** which would continue the periodic increases to the State Library Resource Center (SLRC) per capita funding formula in FY27 through FY32.

The Enoch Pratt Free Library's Central Library was designated to be the State Library Resource Center in 1971 in an effort to provide and expand access to specialized library materials and services that are necessary for coordinated, efficient, and economical library services in Maryland. Unlike most states, Maryland does not have a State Library making access to SLRC services critical to Maryland libraries and citizens across the state.

Washington County specifically benefits from an appropriately funded state library due to its reliance on the SAILOR network, which provides services to Washington County and the City of Hagerstown. Without this connection, prices for the essential internet services our communities need to function would increase, causing financial hardship for the localities, and in turn, citizens.

SLRC also provides many other critical services, including housing the State's "last copy" collection. These materials allow Marylanders access to rare and historic texts relevant to Maryland history. SLRC coordinates library services around the state that are filling a critical demand for services by job seekers, small business owners, early literacy, after-school safe places, and free internet and computer access.

Library services are vital to successful schools, strong communities and adult education and we encourage passage of this important legislation to assure their continuation. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jenny L. Bakos
Executive Director
Washington County Free Library