



**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**  
**SB501 Libraries – Aging Infrastructure Capital Improvement Grant Program - Established**  
**February 27, 2023**  
**Support**

Dear Chairman Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe and Distinguished Members of the Committee:

This letter is in support of SB501 for the purpose of establishing the Aging Infrastructure Capital Improvement Grant Program to address the aging infrastructure capital needs identified in the 2022 Statewide Facilities Needs Assessment, to be administered by the Maryland State Library Agency.

During the 2021 session, the General Assembly increased the annual state funding mandate for the library grant program from \$5 million to \$7.5 million. But even at this level, it will take 20 years to meet the immediate needs of Maryland's libraries.

More than half of the 191 public library buildings in Maryland are over twenty five (25) years old. Our Central Library in Denton is 52 years old and is currently benefiting from Maryland State Capital grant funds to bring it up to current Building Code and ADA compliance, and to be able to provide 21<sup>st</sup> central library services. We are having to conduct this work over two years to handle the local match. Our Federalsburg Branch is 92 years old, a former Federalsburg Women's Club building well past the end of its useful life as a library. It does not meet current code or ADA compliance. There are many services we cannot provide to the residents in the southern part of our county served by this Branch due to lack of space. Meeting the local match for capital grant projects is a challenge for Caroline County Public Library.

This funding would help Maryland public libraries renovate or replace our aging facilities, which in turn would help us provide the 21<sup>st</sup> century services our citizens expect from their public libraries. It would allow the Caroline County Public Library to consider the possibility of building a new branch in Federalsburg,

I respectfully ask for your support of SB501.

Sincerely,

**Debby Bennett**  
Executive Director

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Denton, Maryland 21629  
p 410.479.1343 f 410.479.1443

Federalsburg Branch  
123 Morris Avenue  
Federalsburg, Maryland 21632  
p 410.754.8397 f 410.754.3058

North County Branch  
101 Cedar Lane • P.O. Box 336  
Greensboro, Maryland 21639  
p 410.482.2173 f 410.482.2634