



## WASHINGTON COUNTY FREE LIBRARY

*Where People & Possibilities Meet*

**Education, Energy and the Environment Committee  
SB831 – Libraries - Regional Resource Centers – Governance Requirements  
February 22, 2023**

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagen and Committee members,

I am writing in **Support of SB831 Regional Resource Centers – Governance Requirements**.

In 1957, the Maryland Code, § 23-202, Regional Resource Centers (RRC) statute was passed into law. The law has continued to work well for the Western Maryland Regional Library, but the RRC's on the Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland have other needs that have evolved in their communities.

Over the last eighteen months Maryland's three Regional Libraries, the fourteen county libraries they serve, and the Maryland State Library Agency have been working to strengthen the code that covers Regional Library Governance.

This bill, if codified into law, ensures that the Western Maryland Regional Library will continue to function the way that provides the most support to the citizens of Western Maryland – by allowing it to continue to be under the auspices of the Washington County Free Library Board of Trustees. Under this arrangement, the administrative costs are lower for the Western Maryland Regional Library, which in turn allows more state funding to support materials and programs that are important to members of our communities. This is especially important for Garrett and Allegany Counties, as they have been losing population, and therefore some of their state funding, since 2017.

All three Boards of Trustees in Garrett, Allegany and Washington Counties, and Library Directors for those three systems are in agreement that this is the best form of governance for the Western Maryland Regional Library.

Thank you for your support for SB831, and your continued support of Maryland's libraries.

Jenny L. Bakos  
Executive Director  
Washington County Free Library