

**Ways and Means Committee**  
**HB1115 – Libraries - Regional Resource Centers – Governance**  
**Requirements**  
**March 8, 2023**

Dear Chair Atterbeary, and Vice Chair Wilkins and Committee members:

My name is John Venditta and I'm the Director of the Eastern Shore Regional Library. I am here today to speak in **Support of HB115**

In 1957, the Regional Resource Centers statute was passed into law. The law worked very well for decades, as the regional resource centers were a very small part of library services for the counties they served. Funding was minimal and unstable until the late 1990's when per capita funding was established.

Today, the three regional resource centers have evolved into a major influential force for the fourteen county library systems they support. However, the law governing regional resource centers has not followed suit--we have a 1957 statute guiding 2023 organizations. Over these sixty-some years, the governing boards of the regional resource centers have developed in different ways. They may be made up of trustees from the county library board, they could be citizen trustees, or in ESRL's case, county library executives. Terms range from no term limits, to one and three years. There is no unified guidance from the current statute.

HB1115 contains specific language that defines the governance of the regional resource centers and has been vetted and approved by the regional resource center directors, their current boards, the directors and boards of the fourteen county libraries served, as well as the Maryland State Library Agency.

I am deeply grateful to the Maryland Legislature as a whole for their commitment to public libraries and the services we provide to our citizens. I respectfully ask for your support of HB1115 which will allow Maryland's regional resource centers to continue to expand our role in supporting library equity and access in our rural communities. Thank you for your consideration.