



BILL: Senate Bill 434 **DATE:** January 31, 2024
SUBJECT: Education – State Library **COMMITTEE:** Senate Budget &
Resource Center – Funding Taxation Committee
SPEAKER: Irene Padilla, State Librarian **POSITION:** Neutral

EXPLANATION

On behalf of the Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA), thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter of information regarding Senate Bill 434 - Education - State Library Resource Center - Funding.

This bill proposes increased funding for the State Library Resource Center (SLRC), the Central Library of the Enoch Pratt Free Library system, created in 1971 under State law 23-201. SLRC provides and expands access to specialized library materials and services that are necessary for coordinated, efficient, and economical library services in the State. This funding will allow current services to be maintained and improved. This increase in funding will allow the SLRC to keep up with increases in ongoing costs and continue to develop many innovative and heavily used statewide programs.

The State funding for SLRC and other parts of the State Library Network is provided by the Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA). MSLA contracts with the Enoch Pratt Free Library (EPFL) to operate the SLRC.

SLRC per capita funding is a critical resource for Maryland citizens and libraries across the state. It ensures Maryland residents have equitable access to information. Additionally, SLRC per capita funding encourages statewide cooperation and sharing of resources among public, academic and K - 12 libraries, and provides broadband Internet access for public libraries, schools, and local governments.

Current SLRC per capita funding is scheduled to be \$1.97 per capita under current law. It would remain flat funded thereafter unless this bill is approved by the legislature and the Governor.

Per

(23-206(d) the current funding for the State Library Resource Center is:

- (vi) For fiscal year 2021 \$1.85 per State resident;
- (vii) For fiscal year 2022 \$1.89 per State resident;
- (viii) For fiscal year 2023 \$1.93 per State resident; and
- (ix) For fiscal year 2024 and 2025 and each fiscal year thereafter \$1.97 per State resident.

The bill requests a ten cent increase in FY 2026, an eight cent increase in FY 2027, and a nine

cents per year thereafter through FY 2030. EPFL now has a union and costs are expected to rise. Costs for contracted services and equipment are also anticipated to increase. The bill will provide for annual inflationary increases in the rate between FY 2026 and FY 2030.

- (x) for fiscal year 2026.....\$2.07 per state resident;
- (xi) for fiscal year 2027.....\$2.15 per state resident;
- (xii) for fiscal year 2028.....\$2.24 per state resident;
- (xiii) for fiscal year 2029.....\$2.33 per state resident;
- (xiv) for fiscal year 2030.....\$2.42 per state resident;
- (xv) for fiscal year 2031 and each fiscal year thereafter.....\$2.52 per state resident.

This bill will also alter the mandated amount for the Maryland Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (LBPD) for fiscal years 2026 through FY 2030 (23-205(e)).

This funding for the SLRC and LBPD will allow current services to be maintained and improved. This increase in funding will allow the SLRC to keep up with increases in ongoing costs and continue to develop many innovative and heavily used statewide programs.

Resources, services and programs currently supported by SLRC Per Capita funding include:

- Sailor Network & Resources (21 Maryland Public Library Systems depend on this resource for access to the Internet for their staff and customers)
- Interlibrary loan of needed materials not owned by local library systems.
- Staff Development and Learning Opportunities for Maryland librarians, including workshops needed for state of Maryland Public Librarian certification.
- Online resource database subscriptions needed by Marylanders, especially students K-12, to support homework, research and a variety of information needs.

The Maryland State Library Agency respectfully asks that you consider this information as you deliberate SB 434.