

**Ways and Means Committee**  
**HB 0489 State Library Resource Center - Funding - Favorable**  
**February 7, 2024**

Dear Chairman Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, Delegate Jones, and members of the committee,

The Queen Anne's County Library supports HB 0489 Education – State Library Resource Center - Funding which would continue the periodic increases to the State Library Resource Center (SLRC) per capita funding formula for FY 2025 through FY 2031.

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.

Maryland Interlibrary Loan (MILO) provides pickup, delivery, and coordination of borrowing throughout the state. Anyone in the state with a library card to any public library can request books from any other library including SLRC. This system also facilitates national and international borrowing. Queen Anne's County residents and library users around the state rely on SLRC to deliver the many books that our local library cannot find space for on our shelves or afford to purchase. SLRC anticipates that delivery charges will continue to rise along with gas prices and contractual driver wages.

A service that Queen Anne's County Library relies heavily upon is the educational databases for libraries and public schools that SLRC provides at no cost to our library system. In FY23 14,084 sessions of these databases were logged by Queen Anne's County Library patrons. One heavily used collection is the Gale Educational Databases, which provides full-text, abstracts, and indexes that are integrated with core titles in every major academic concentration, from art and literature to economics and the sciences as well as new vocational/technical titles used by community college students, high school and middle school students, and lifelong learners. The cost of the Gale databases increased by 43% between FY21 and FY22. SLRC will be re-negotiating their three-year contract in FY25 and expects a similar increase.

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. Queen Anne's County residents rely on these services and this funding is crucial to maintaining and expanding this service.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Janet Salazar  
Director  
Queen Anne's County Library