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Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary
Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building, Room 131
6 Bladen Street,
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

February 7, 2024

RE: House Bill 0489 Education – State Library Resource Center - Funding

Dear Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the citizens of Calvert County, I respectfully request support of **House Bill 489 Education – State Library Resource Center - Funding**. The resources and expertise that all Maryland residents have access to from Enoch Pratt Free Library and the State Library Resource Center (SLRC) are invaluable. The public library and the school system in Calvert, and across the state, rely on SLRC to provide access to educational databases. In FY23, Calvert Library recorded nearly 55,000 uses of SLRC-provided databases. That figure doesn't include the uses from the public school system whose students can rely on the Gale databases for primary source references. Cost for Gale databases increased by 43% between FY21 and FY22. These resources are relied upon by Maryland residents and funding must be increased to allow this resource sharing to continue.

Databases are only one of the many resources that my library relies on from SLRC. We also use the SLRC internet connection, as does our local government, the physical collection, the expertise of subject-matter expert librarians, Inter-Library Loan and the high-quality training provided by SLRC.

I urge your support for HB0489 which will provide the increases in funding necessary for the State Library Resource Center to sustain its current level of services to public libraries, public schools and local governments.

Sincerely,

Carrie Willson
Executive Director, Calvert Library

