



Ways and Means Committee  
HB 489 Education – State Library Resource Center - Funding  
February 5, 2023

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

I am writing to ask for your favorable support of HB 489 Education – State Library Resource Center - Funding. This bill provides necessary funding for the State Library Resource Center for FY2024-FY2030.

The State Library Resource Center (SLRC) provides many important services to public and school libraries across the state, including broadband internet and digital resources. It is a highly collaborative system that maximizes return on state and local dollars and allows county library systems to operate most efficiently.

SLRC is an extremely well utilized, economical and cost-effective way to connect all Marylanders with a multitude of valuable services, including workforce education, small business training, historical and special collections that pertain to Maryland as well as programs, database access and inter-library loan services.

Last year, SLRC loaned more than 300,000 items and facilitated 46,000 inter-library loans- an essential service that SLRC coordinates throughout the state which allows libraries to share books and other resources from county to county. With a limited budget for print collections in Carroll County, we rely heavily on SLRC's inter-library loan service to connect citizens with the resources they need to create individual and community success.

Additionally, SLRC provides database access to all county public library systems throughout the state. Last year, Marylanders performed more than 10.6 million searches using high quality databases provided by SLRC. For Carroll Countians, this includes access to Heritage Quest, Mango Foreign Languages, and Gale reference databases. Although essential for our citizens, we would never be able to broker these databases as a stand-alone county.

Libraries across the state appreciate SLRC's leadership in expanding digital equity throughout the state and training library staff to deliver in-demand 21st century library services. Your committee's support for their current and future funding will ensure they are able to meet these goals and that no citizen, or county public library system, is left behind. Thank you for your past support of the State Library Resource Center's mission and funding and we ask that you favorably recommend HB 489 for passage.

Sincerely,

Andrea Berstler, Executive Director