



**SOMERSET
COUNTY LIBRARY**

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**House Bill 489
Education - State Library Resource Center - Funding
Ways and Means Committee
February 7, 2024
SUPPORT**

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

The Somerset County Library strongly supports **HB 489 Education – State Library Resource Center - Funding**, which would ensure modest, periodic increases to the State Library Resource Center (SLRC)'s per capita funding formula from FY25 through FY31.

The Enoch Pratt Free Library's Central Library was designated the State Library Resource Center (SLRC) in 1971 to provide and expand access to specialized library materials and services necessary for coordinated, efficient, and economical library services in Maryland. Unlike most states, Maryland does not have a State Library, making access to State Library Resource Center services critical to Maryland libraries and residents across the state.

Somerset County residents benefit immensely from the broad range of resources that are provided by the State Library Resource Center, including various premium educational resources, such as Gale, Heritage Quest, and Mango Languages. The cost of these databases has risen dramatically. For example, the Gale databases have increased by 43% between FY21 and FY22, and we anticipate similar increases next fiscal year.

The Library, local government, and our patrons also benefit immensely from the high-speed Internet connection service provided by the State Library Resource Center.

The statewide Interlibrary loan program, Marina, provides Somerset Countians with a far broader range of resources than we would be able to acquire locally. Last year, the service loaned more than 300,000 items and facilitated 46,000 interlibrary loans.

Thank you for your past support of the State Library Resource Center, and we ask that you **favorably recommend HB 489** for passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Ed Goyda'.

Ed Goyda

Library Director

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