



Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Committee Members,

The Maryland Library Association requests your favorable support of HB 489 - Education - State Library Resource Center - Funding.

The Maryland State Library Resource Center provides access to educational and informational resources for Maryland library users in all public and school libraries throughout the state for no cost. In 2023, the State Library Resource Center circulated 300,000 items, facilitated an additional 46,000 items circulated via the interlibrary loan system, and allowed Maryland library users 10.6 million searches using high-quality databases. In addition, the Maryland State Library Resource Center provides high-speed fiber internet to all public libraries in Maryland and 25 municipalities and government agencies throughout the state at no cost to those organizations. The cost of these services increased by 43% in fiscal years 21 and 22. The Maryland State Library Resource Center will renegotiate some of these resource access contracts in fiscal year 25 and expects similar price increases.

The Maryland State Library resource center provides access to electronic and physical resources that enhance public education. They also provide workforce and small business development resources, language-learning programs, and rare local historical archives. No individual library could provide all of these resources on their own. These assets are an incredible investment of state and local dollars.

Additionally, the Maryland State Library Resource Center manages the state's interlibrary loan system, which provides pickup, delivery, and coordination of borrowing library materials throughout the state to library users with a Maryland library card to increase access to valuable library resources. This system employs a family-owned and operated courier service based in Washington County, Maryland. As a result of this partnership, the local courier business has expanded and created new jobs.

The Maryland State Library Resource Center's most recent strategic plan is ambitious and forward-thinking. It focuses on expanding digital equity throughout the state and training all Maryland library workers to deliver in-demand 21st-century library services that will enhance lives. This committee's support for funding for the Maryland State Library Resource Center will ensure its ability to meet these goals and that no citizen or public library system is left behind.





MARYLAND
LIBRARY
ASSOCIATION

Supporting Maryland Libraries Through Advocacy,
Collaboration, and Continuing Education.

Thank you for your past support of the Maryland State Library Resource Center's mission and funding. The Maryland Library Association asks that you favorably recommend HB 489 for passage.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Sutherland
President



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