



Carrie Willson, Executive Director • carrie.willson@calvertlibrary.info
850 Costley Way • Prince Frederick, MD 20678 • 410-535-0291 • 301-855-1862

BILL: HB 597 – Public Libraries – **DATE:** February 4, 2025
State Library Resource
Center - Funding

SUBJECT: FY27-31 per capita increases **COMMITTEE:** Appropriations

TESTIMONY FROM: Carrie Willson, Executive Director, Calvert Library **POSITION:** Support

Dear Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the citizens of Calvert County, I respectfully request support of **House Bill 597 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 FY24, Calvert Library recorded over 81,000 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. If each library system and school system purchased their own access it would cost \$4.6 million. That same access, purchased collectively by SLRC, costs \$618,000. These resources are relied upon by Maryland residents but funding must be increased to enable 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 HB0597 which will takes into account the difficult FY26 budget outlook but ensures a strong future for SLRC by providing incremental increases for FY27-31. These increases are vital for the State Library Resource Center to sustain its current level of service to public libraries, public schools and local government.

Sincerely,

Carrie Willson
Executive Director, Calvert Library

