



Public Libraries - State Library Resource Center - Funding
Appropriations Committee
February 4, 2025
SUPPORT

Dear Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and Committee Members,

The Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) strongly supports **HB 497 Public Libraries – State Library Resource Center - Funding**, which would ensure modest, periodic increases to the State Library Resource Center (SLRC) per capita funding formula starting in fiscal year 2027.

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.

Prince George's County Memorial Library System and Prince Georgians benefit immensely from the State Library Resource Center services. Last year, Prince Georgians received over 25,000 items via the statewide interlibrary loan program, Marina, administered by SLRC. Our customers, including all Prince George's County Public School students, have access to various educational databases, including Gale, Heritage Quest, and Mango Languages, provided at no cost to PGCMLS. The economic benefits of consortium rate pricing for SLRC databases are substantial. For example, SLRC's Gale Databases would cost a total of \$4.6M for libraries and schools in FY24 if purchased individually. Because SLRC buys them at a consortium rate, the same number of people get access for only \$618,000, saving Maryland taxpayers over \$4 million annually. Libraries, schools, local governments, and EMS throughout the state benefit from the high-speed internet connection service provided at no cost to recipients through the State Library Resource Center. The SAILOR network was operational and functioning 99.91% of the time in FY24.

Thank you for your past support of the State Library Resource Center, and we ask that you **favorably recommend HB 497** for passage.

Sincerely,

Mark Winston, Ph. D.
CEO