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**House Appropriations Committee**  
**HB 597 - Public Libraries - State Library Resource Center - Funding**  
**January 31, 2025**  
**Support**

Dear Chair Barnes and Committee Members,

I am writing in **support of HB 597 - Public Libraries - State Library Resource Center - Funding**. The bill will provide necessary funding for the State Library Resource Center. 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 more efficiently.

SLRC is an extremely well utilized, economical and cost-effective way to connect all Marylanders with a multitude of valuable services, including workforce and small business training, historical and special collections that pertain to Maryland, programs, database access and inter-library loan services. Last year, SLRC facilitated the interlibrary loan of over 324,000 items to patrons across Maryland - an essential service that SLRC coordinates throughout the state to share books and other resources from county to county. With a limited budget for print collections in Talbot 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 accessed SLRC databases more than 8.9 million times through public and academic libraries. For Talbot residents, this includes access to Peterson's Test Prep for college, career, and educational attainment, Mango Foreign Languages, and Heritage Quest- an online resource for genealogical research. Although essential for our citizens, we would never be able to broker these databases as a stand-alone county. Their resources expand digital equity throughout the state. They also train 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, student, or county public library system, is left behind.

SLRC also provides vital guidance, development, grant support, and delivery of materials between libraries, that it serves.

SLRC is critical to providing support to the public during times of hardship and is instrumental in helping with economic recovery.

Thank you for your past support of the State Library Resource Center's mission and funding and we ask that you favorably recommend HB597 for passage

Sincerely,

Dana Newman  
Library Director