



BILL: HB 597

DATE: January 31, 2025

**BILL NAME: Public Libraries - State Library
Resource Center - Funding**

COMMITTEE: House Appropriations

**SUBMITTED BY: Jennifer Ranck, Worcester
County Library**

POSITION: Support

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

I write in strong support of HB 597. As the director of the Worcester County Library, I can attest to the State Library Resource Center's (SLRC) ability to provide high-quality library service to every corner of our state. SLRC expands access to specialized library materials and services that are necessary for coordinated, efficient, and economical library services in Maryland. SLRC provides Marylanders of all ages access to educational databases, genealogy databases, language learning databases, and vocational databases through their local libraries and K-12 schools.

SLRC supplies the internet backbone for all public libraries in Maryland as well as many other municipalities and government agencies, including EMS services. The SAILOR network was operational and functioning 99.91% of the time in FY24. Millions of books and library materials are shared across the state because of the delivery system SLRC provides - increased costs put these services at risk. This legislation provides continued investment in SLRC which is, in turn, an investment in libraries, public school students, and library users around the state.

Libraries are foundational to education, economic opportunity, and lifelong learning. **I respectfully request that you support the passage of HB 597.**

Sincerely,

Jennifer Ranck
Director