



**SOMERSET
COUNTY LIBRARY**
The Heart of the Community

BILL: HB 1592

DATE: March 18, 2026

**SUBJECT: Education - Regional
Resource Centers and County Libraries -
Funding / Public Libraries – Young Readers
Matching Grant Program, Funding, and
Services**

**COMMITTEE: House Appropriations
Committee**

POSITION: Support

**SUBMITTED BY: Ed Goyda, Director,
Somerset County Library**

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

I am writing in **support of HB 1592 – Education - Regional Resource Centers and County Libraries - Funding / Public Libraries – Young Readers Matching Grant Program, Funding, and Services**, which is intended to extend per capita increases for the county libraries and regional resources centers through FY32. These funding increases will help sustain the important work that libraries perform in your local communities.

Maryland libraries provide robust access to a wide range of services to support lifelong learning, from developing a love of reading and early literacy skills for infants and pre-school children – hosting nearly 30,000 programs for ages birth through five, with total attendance of 900,000 – to providing a wide range of adult programs including workforce training, tax assistance, legal aid, and technology assistance.

Over the past decade, the increasing costs of providing library services (42%) has outpaced inflation (31.8%), driven largely by the increased costs of salaries and wages to ensure that libraries are staffed sufficiently to provide this wide range of services in our communities. Extending the increases of the state share allows us to continue to meet increased operating costs and public service demands.

Support for the regional resource centers is also vital to providing these services in small and rural counties. The Eastern Shore Regional Library provides a host of benefits to residents of Somerset County that the local library will be able to provide on our own, including more than \$500,000 worth of eBooks, premium databases, and audio and video content. The Regional Library is also vital in administering our collection management software, providing materials delivery, and providing a wealth of professional development opportunities.

We respectfully ask that you fund public and regional libraries at a level that will allow us to sustain our role in supporting equity and access in our communities. Thank you for your consideration.

The Somerset County Library supports the passage of this budget item.

Sincerely,

Ed Goyda
Director
Somerset County Library

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11767 Beechwood Street, Princess Anne, MD 21853
410-651-0852
somelibrary.org