



Date: February 16, 2026

Bill: SB 410
Committee: Senate Budget & Taxation
Subject: State Library Resource Center – Funding
Position: Support
Submitted by: Lori Milach, Eastern Shore Regional Library CEO

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of SB 410 as the libraries on the Eastern Shore of Maryland would be significantly affected by any reduction in funding to the State Library Resource Center. The public libraries across the Eastern Shore operate in predominantly rural communities where financial resources are already constrained. When state funding is reduced or fails to keep pace with need, these local systems are forced to scale back essential services.

In such circumstances, regional systems like ESRL inevitably experience indirect fiscal pressure as we are often called upon to offset service reductions by expanding regional support, absorbing additional costs, or stretching existing resources beyond sustainable levels. This may require reallocating funds from other critical regional initiatives, delaying technology upgrades, limiting professional development, or reducing cooperative services that benefit all member libraries. Over time, this redistribution weakens the overall library infrastructure serving our rural communities.

Public libraries are foundational community institutions. On the Eastern Shore, they serve as primary access points for broadband and technology, workforce development assistance, early literacy programs, small business resources, and safe community spaces. In many areas, the local library is the only free public access point for internet connectivity and educational support.

Senate Bill 410 represents a proactive step toward stabilizing funding and protecting rural library systems from service erosion. For rural communities already facing economic and geographic challenges, predictable and sufficient library funding is essential to maintaining equity of access across the state.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 410.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Milach, DPA
Chief Executive Officer
Eastern Shore Regional Library