

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Angie Jacobsen
Director of Communications
614-410-8092 x110
ajacobsen@olc.org

Ohio House Budget Reduces Public Library Funding by \$100 Million

Columbus – The Ohio House introduced its version of the state budget, which includes cuts to funding for Ohio’s public libraries. The substitute bill introduced in the House Finance Committee proposes eliminating the Public Library Fund (PLF) in current law at the state level as it exists today.

“Ohio’s public libraries already experienced a \$27 million loss in state funding in Calendar Year (CY) 2024 as compared to CY 2023. This resulted in libraries being funded at the same level they were 25 years ago,” said Michelle Francis, executive director of the Ohio Library Council.

PLF CY 2023	\$510.18 million
PLF CY 2024	\$483.3 million
PLF FY 2024	\$489.3 million
PLF FY 2025*	\$530 million

*PLF Estimate from Ohio Office of Budget and Management

The House’s version of the budget would reduce state funding for Ohio’s public libraries by more than \$100 million over the biennium as compared to the Governor’s proposal. In addition, the new distribution formula would cut funding to public libraries in 39 counties on July 1.

Under Sub. House Bill 96, the Ohio House would allocate the following for public libraries:

- FY 2026 – \$485 million
- FY 2027 – \$495 million

In comparison, Governor DeWine’s proposed budget allocates the following to the PLF:

- FY 2026 – \$531.7 million
- FY 2027 – \$549.1 million

“Ohio’s public libraries have had a partnership with the state to deliver services at the local level for almost 100 years and that funding is now at risk. Public libraries serve all ages, and funding cuts of this magnitude could jeopardize the vital services that our communities rely on,” said Francis.

“Ohioans love and use their public libraries. They visited their local libraries more than 44.6 million times in 2023. That is the equivalent of 434 sold-out Buckeye football games at Ohio Stadium (102,780 capacity). We are committed to ensuring that all Ohioans continue to receive the support they need from their public libraries – everyone from young children to senior citizens. This reduction in funding is not in the best interest of Ohioans,” said Francis.

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