

To: The Honorable Mike DeWine
The Honorable Larry Householder
The Honorable Emilia Sykes
The Honorable Larry Obhof
The Honorable Kenny Yuko
Dr. Amy Acton, MD, MPH

From: Michelle Francis, OLC Executive Director
Jay Smith, OLC Director of Government & Legal Services

Date: March 26, 2020

Re: Am. Sub. H.B. 197

The Ohio Library Council would like to thank all of you, as well as your colleagues, for taking decisive actions during these unprecedented times in Ohio while we are all at war with the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The measures passed unanimously by the legislature in Am. Sub. House Bill 197 are just another example of our state leaders coming together and taking steps to offer emergency relief for Ohioans and providing state and local governments with the tools necessary to continue essential operations.

Ohio's public libraries have the highest use per capita in the nation and are cherished community gathering places. However, at this time libraries have made the very difficult decision to close their doors in order to help stop the spread of this deadly virus. With that said, our libraries are so much more than brick-and-mortar buildings and many of our libraries have gone the extra mile by providing digital resources to keep Ohioans educated and entertained. This includes many libraries boosting their WiFi to accommodate the increased usage. In addition, some libraries have opened their doors in support of blood drives and the increased need at this time.

The following is a list of what's available at most public libraries even when the physical building is closed:

- Free WiFi can be accessed 24/7 in library parking lots
- eBooks, audiobooks, and magazines using Overdrive/Libby app to access
- eBooks, audiobooks, movies, TV shows, and music through hoopla
- Five hours per day of streaming music through Freegal
- Free online learning through Gale Courses and [LinkedIn Learning](#)
- Online arts and crafts projects, including patterns and templates, on Creativebug
- Acorn TV
- Genealogy resources like Ancestry, HeritageQuest, African American Heritage, Fold3 Military Records

As the statewide association representing Ohio's 251 public library systems, we look forward to working with you in the days and months ahead as we look towards recovery from this global health crisis. Rest assured, Ohio's public libraries will be ready to answer the call to serve their communities and show the rest of the country why Ohio is the best state in the country!