

Talking Points

Maintaining the Public Library Fund (PLF) at a minimum of 1.7% of the General Revenue Fund (GRF) is critical as the usage and demand for library services is increasing. If additional changes are made to Ohio House Bill (HB) 33 that could impact the state's GRF base (indirectly reducing the PLF), we are asking the General Assembly to increase the PLF to offset those reductions.

We are urging lawmakers to:

- Make public libraries a priority in the state budget (HB 33).
- Maintain PLF funding and set the permanent law language at a minimum of 1.7% of the state's General Revenue Fund (GRF).
- Hold public libraries harmless from any additional reductions in state funding (HB 1).

Highlight how your library builds success in:

EDUCATION AND LITERACY

Share how your library builds the foundation for reading and school readiness in your community. Also share how your library is helping students recover from the learning loss caused by the pandemic. Provide examples of early literacy activities, homework help/tutoring, after-school programs, summer enrichment and partnerships with local schools.

INTERNET ACCESS AND TECHNOLOGY

Share how your library provides internet access and connects people to the latest technology. Provide examples of digital literacy assistance, coding/computer programming, robotics, 3D printing and other makerspace items. Be sure to include any specific lending programs with devices and connectivity (mobile Wi-Fi hotspots, laptop lending, etc.).

WORKFORCE / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB TRAINING

Share examples of what your library is doing to help individuals in your community find jobs (resume help, job search assistance, online educational training). Also share how your library helps local businesses and entrepreneurs with makerspace items such as vinyl printers, photo and video equipment as well as access to computer training, meeting rooms, shared workspace, and job/career fairs.

Also, share how your library:

- Serves as the hub for your community and a place for people to gather.
- Collaborates with private groups, food banks, and state and local government entities to help deliver local services.
- Provides life-long learning opportunities and programming for all ages.
- Offers personalized, one-on-one support to find unbiased and well researched information as well as community resources.

More Facts:

- Unlike counties, cities and school districts, public libraries do not receive revenue from Ohio's casinos.
- Not all public libraries have a local property tax levy. Forty-nine public library systems rely on state funding through the PLF as their primary source of funding for day-to-day operations and providing services to their communities.
- More than half of the total funding for Ohio's public libraries comes from the state through the PLF.
- Unlike schools and other local governments, public libraries do not receive state funding for facilities/buildings through the Capital Appropriations Bill. The only option is to utilize operating funds, pass a bond levy, or borrow extremely limited amounts of funds.

Infrastructure needs:

- Discuss how you are addressing aging building(s) to ensure safety, accessibility, and innovation. Provide an example of a major infrastructure need, such as roofing, HVAC, elevators, etc.