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Senate of Pennsylvania

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May 02, 2022

Senator Jay Costa
Democratic Leader
Room: 535 Main Capitol
Senate Box 203043
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3043

Senator Vincent Hughes
Minority Chairman, Appropriations Committee
Room: 545 Main Capitol
Senate Box 203007
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3007

Re: Library Funding in the FY 2022-23 Budget

Dear Leader Costa and Chairman Hughes,

When we reconvene in the coming weeks to finalize the budget for the 2022-23 fiscal year, I want to ensure we focus our attention on dedicating the necessary resources to support our libraries. I'm proud to be a member of a caucus that understands that libraries are vital, vibrant parts of our communities. We know each library connects with its community in a unique way. We saw the value of libraries on full display during the COVID-19 pandemic. Librarians and support staff innovated, invested, and initiated new programs and incorporated new technologies to ensure they remained an accessible resource to people in the community. As state revenues recover from the pandemic and we explore how to use federal relief funding, I think we're in no better position restore funding cuts and to make new investments in our libraries.

Advocates and supporters recommend increasing the Public Library Basic Aid Line Item to \$70.75 million, the Library of Accessible Media for Pennsylvanians ("LAMP") line item to \$2.695 million, and the Library Access Line Item to \$3.225 million. Each of our communities will benefit from these worthwhile increases and I support including these requests in the final FY22-23 Budget.

Librarians share stories with me about checking on older patrons during the pandemic, coordinating home deliveries of books and materials, and being a resource hub for information when people have questions about the virus or vaccine. Libraries serve our children and young adults by providing critical opportunities for development, learning, and using their imagination. They offer meeting space for members of the community to connect or to take classes. My office has held remote office hours at libraries to help constituents with issues related to the state and my staff often takes referrals from library staff for people looking for help on their unemployment or seeking tax forms. Personally, one of the best parts of serving as a State Senator is reading to children during a library's story time. Please make this funding request a priority. If you have any follow up questions, please do not hesitate to reach out: Lindsey.Williams@PASenate.com | 412-364-0469.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lindsey M. Williams".

Lindsey M. Williams
38th Senatorial District