



Leadership. Advocacy. Communication

## ***State Aid to Public Libraries Rationale***

The State Aid to Public Libraries program has received strong support from the Florida legislature and the Florida library community appreciates those legislators and leaders who have stepped up for library service for their communities. As we look forward to new legislators entering the legislature and the 2011 regular session, it is timely to present the rationale for State Aid to Public Libraries and for state funding.

### ***The Program***

- ***\$21.2 Million – The Current State Aid to Public Libraries Appropriation*** – It has already been cut by 1/3 over the past nine years from \$33.4 million in 2001!
- ***Background*** – The program was established in 1961 (F.S. 257) to aid and encourage the establishment of free library service statewide. The program is administered by the State Library and Archives of Florida, a Division of the Florida Department of State.
- ***How It Works*** – Dollars are divided among libraries based on their communities' tax base, local support, and whether they belong to multicounty systems. In 2008, 30 county libraries received over 25% of their funding from State Aid. Your library's estimated 2010-11 funding can be found at [http://dlis.dos.state.fl.us/bld/grants/StateAid/Estimate2010-2011at\\$21253978.pdf](http://dlis.dos.state.fl.us/bld/grants/StateAid/Estimate2010-2011at$21253978.pdf)

### ***Why Florida Needs State Support for Public Libraries!***

- ***\$21.2 Million Is Required to Receive \$9 Million in Federal Library Funding*** – The federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) provides Florida with about \$9 million annually and \$21.2 million is the state's Maintenance of Effort required to receive those dollars. LSTA dollars are used to pay for critical statewide services like the Florida Electronic Library and grants to local libraries.
- ***Help for Job Searchers*** – The biggest challenge facing Florida is getting folks back to work, and libraries are at the forefront of that effort. Libraries are playing a big role in helping job searchers prepare resumes and submit applications online.
- ***Support for E-Government Services*** – Libraries help Floridians reach needed government services over the Internet. Public libraries provide computers, Internet access, and most provide wireless to support those who need services from local, state, and federal government.
- ***Help Florida Business!*** – All libraries offer business reference material and service. Some also provide extensive web-based resources to meet needs of the business community. Some libraries partner with local Chambers of Commerce to provide programs and other resources for small businesses. Some offer business assistance centers with extensive specialized resources and staff and many provide investment information.

## ***Why Florida Needs State Support for Public Libraries! (Continued)***

- ***Public libraries Are Where Young Children Learn To Read and Parents Learn To Be Their Child's First Teacher*** – Libraries provide reading programs for toddlers, parents and caregivers. They provide books so parents and caregivers can read to young children and conduct pre-school programs so parents can learn to be their child's first teacher. Exposing children to books makes a huge difference in their success in school.
- ***Support K-20 Students!*** – The library is where students read for enjoyment, get help from tutors and library homework help programs, and do research afternoons, on weekends, and evenings. Libraries are also where kids go during the summer and research shows that young people who participate in library summer reading programs do not suffer summer learning loss. Teens benefit from a safe place for reading, computers, games and supervised socializing. Students enrolled in college and university programs also rely on public libraries, especially those involved in distance learning programs.
- ***The Need for State Funding for Libraries Is Just Like the Need for Public Education*** – There is no question that the state has an interest in public education and should help fund it. The state also has an interest in ensuring that all Floridians have access to at least a minimum level of public library service and should help fund libraries too.
- ***Libraries Help Floridians Learn 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technology, Information, & Communication Skills*** – To be successful in our information-based economy, Floridians need to know how to use technology, find reliable information, and communicate effectively. Florida libraries play a vital role in helping folks learn these skills through formal classes and informal coaching.
- ***Floridians Love Their Libraries!*** – Fifty-six percent – over 10 million Floridians - have library cards. They visited the library over 85 million times and borrowed over 115 million items.

***Thank You!***

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