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ALA American Library Association

July 6, 2020

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
Governor of Florida
400 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor DeSantis:

At a moment when access to information is of critical importance for continuity in teaching and learning, we are concerned to hear that funding has been eliminated for the Complete Florida Plus Program, including all funding for the Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative and \$2 million from Florida's multitype library cooperatives.

The resources available through the Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative ensure that Florida's 1.3 million public college and university students, faculty, and staff maintain access to high quality research and scholarship. Public colleges and universities will incur far greater costs to individually purchase and maintain their own online library systems; provide databases and e-resources; borrow materials from other institutions; host open educational resources platforms; and curate digital archives and collections.

Similarly, funding for multitype library cooperatives reduces costs incurred by libraries of all types for professional development, interlibrary loan and delivery, implementation of new technologies, and shared information.

Public, school, and academic libraries have long been leaders in creating innovative, cooperative models to consolidate costs and maximize access across institutions, offering digital resources, online learning, and preservation of community history. The value of resource sharing is clear and, in this current moment when our educational institutions seek to ensure that their communities have the resources needed for education, career, and full participation in society, those cooperative models are more critical than ever.

We know that Florida, like other states, faces serious budget challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet the Complete Florida Plus Program represents the very cost sharing and efficiencies that are warranted in difficult economic times. On behalf of American Library Association's nearly two thousand members in Florida, as well as the many communities they serve, we appreciate the state's provision of funding to public libraries and its commitment to restoring funding for essential programs within the Complete Florida Plus Program. We respectfully request that FALSC and multitype library funding be recognized as critical to advancing education and opportunity across the state.

Sincerely,



Julius C. Jefferson, Jr., President
American Library Association

cc: Laura Spears, President, Florida Library Association

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