



CHIEF OFFICERS OF STATE LIBRARY AGENCIES

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April 25, 2017

Dear Member of Congress,

The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), administered by the Institute for Museum and Library Services, provides critically important funding for our nation's libraries. Eighty-five percent of funding available through LSTA is directed to state and territory library agencies through the Grants to States program. State and territory library agencies identify the most appropriate uses of Grants to States program funds in their state or territory, resulting in efficient and effective use of federal funds that advance known priorities through local reach to a broad range of community members.

LSTA Grants to States funds are put to work in our communities in a myriad of ways that make differences. Libraries use LSTA funds to promote early literacy and support students, parents, and teachers in fostering year-round learning. Many states use LSTA funds to help individuals of all ages navigate their personal goals and improve their own lives. Each day patrons utilize the services and resources provided by libraries to navigate e-government, build skills, apply for jobs, and engage in entrepreneurship, and each day community members participate in civic engagement in library spaces. Many states and territories use LSTA funds to provide help and library services to their state's citizens who have visual or physical handicaps.

Investment of \$300 million in the nation's public libraries through the LSTA Grants to States program – less than \$1 per capita – will boost already successful efforts to address priorities of a vast number communities in the United States efficiently and cost effectively. At a minimum, we advise Congress to ensure at least level LSTA funding, but urge you to take this opportunity to build on the strength of success through libraries.

LSTA Grants to States are the largest source of federal funding support for library services in the United States and a cornerstone of public library funding scenarios, greatly enhancing incentive for local and state investment. In summary, the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies urge you to support an increase in funding to \$300 million for the LSTA Grants to States program for the fiscal year 2018. This funding, distributed to state and territory library agencies through a population-based formula, will increase the ability of public libraries to act and tailor services to matters of greatest importance to the communities they serve.

Sincerely,

Sandra G. Treadway
President