



CHIEF OFFICERS OF STATE LIBRARY AGENCIES

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Statement on the Library Stabilization Fund Act of 2020

On July 2, 2020, Senator Jack Reed (RI) and Representative Andy Levin (MI-9) introduced companion legislation in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, the Library Stabilization Fund Act of 2020 ([S.4181](#) and [H.R.7486](#)). The Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) thank Senator Reed and Representative Levin and the many cosponsors of the bills for their support, insightful action, and astute understanding of the importance and effectiveness of libraries as unique and vital community infrastructure.

The March 2020 CARES Act provided critical funding to state library agencies across the country to aid in response and recovery from the coronavirus pandemic, and that funding is now at work filling urgent community needs. Since the pandemic erupted, assisted by leadership and coordination through their state library agencies, libraries have been increasing technology and internet access, lending hotspots, offering online digital content for students and others, providing books through delivery or pickup, and hosting online classes, story times, and discussion groups. Libraries are bridging the digital divide, enabling people to connect, students to learn, adults to telework, and job seekers to find employment and receive training. Libraries also serve as a trusted portal to health information and government services.

Even as progress is demonstrable, needs are immense. We urge passage of The Library Stabilization Fund Act to enable libraries to continue and expand this critical work. With increased funding, state library agencies across the United States will be well-positioned to assist local libraries in delivering life-changing services. With streamlined mechanisms for distributing funds, and the ability to leverage state resources, state libraries remain a key conduit of federal funds to local libraries.

COSLA strongly supports the Library Stabilization Fund Act. Libraries are trusted institutions, central to civic life, and well-positioned to serve as catalysts for recovery and resilience. The purposes proposed in the Library Stabilization Fund Act and the means by which it will be deployed will strengthen the ability of local libraries to respond to critical and unique needs in their communities, whether it is access to hotspots, the internet, computers, skills training, or authoritative information provided by trusted library professionals. The Act presents an unparalleled opportunity to ensure that libraries across the country – large and small; public, school and academic – will continue to be part of recovery efforts as they help job-seekers, students, families, the elderly, and the digitally disenfranchised to succeed and to thrive.

For more information, contact COSLA Executive Director Timothy Cherubini at tcherubini@cosla.org.

COSLA is an independent organization of the chief officers of state and territorial agencies designated as the state library administrative agency and responsible for statewide library development. Its purpose is to provide leadership on issues of common concern and national interest; to further state library agency relationships with federal government and national organizations; and to initiate cooperative action for the improvement of library services to the people of the United States. <https://www.cosla.org/>