

Pennsylvania Library Association Goals for 2009-10 State Budget

**In order to maintain vitally needed library services for constituents in FY 2009-10,
the Pennsylvania Library Association calls for
state funding equal to the current year (FY 2008-09.)**

Pennsylvania's librarians well understand the impact of this current recession. They experience it every hour of every workday. Our staff members serve on the front line:

- 1 Providing vital services to unemployed, undertrained and first-time jobseekers including access to the Internet and electronic resources for jobs, education, and training; information on careers and opportunities; and staff expertise to assist with resumes and applications.
- 2 Guiding students, families, and business people to the latest books and other printed and computer resources as well as DVDs and downloadable books.
- 3 Offering well-trained, professional staff to meet the informational and educational needs of all library customers.

Demand for library services is up dramatically during this recession. **Libraries all across Pennsylvania are busier** than ever before serving people looking for work, families on tight budgets, and retirees grappling with shrinking savings. Yet the Governor's budget proposes to **cut 5.1%** from state support for library services, or \$4,790,000, even as the \$14 billion Department of Education budget grows overall. **Even worse, these cuts not only reduce library services, they also will trigger the loss of nearly one million dollars in federal funds.**

Program (line item)	FY 2008-09 Total	Governor's Proposal for FY 2009-10	% Change	\$ Reduction in State Funding as Proposed	Additional Loss of Federal Funds That Will Result	\$ Impact on Library Services
Office of Commonwealth Libraries (includes State Library operations)	\$ 4,846,000	\$ 2,396,000	-50.6%	- \$ 2,450,000		
Library Services/Visually Impaired & Disabled	\$ 2,976,000	\$ 2,926,000	-1.7%	- \$ 50,000		
Library Access (POWER Library, statewide card, interlibrary delivery)	\$ 7,290,000	\$ 7,000,000	-4.0%	- \$ 290,000		
Electronic Library Catalog (Ask Here PA, Access PA database)	\$ 3,792,000	\$ 3,542,000	-6.6%	- \$ 250,000		
Public Library Subsidy	\$ 75,750,000	\$ 74,000,000	-2.3%	-\$ 1,750,000		
Total – All Library Programs	\$ 94,654,000	\$ 89,864,000	-5.1%	- \$ 4,790,000	- \$ 906,000	- \$ 5,696,000

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But there's one more additional, important fact:

Governor Rendell's proposed budget will cost Pennsylvania nearly a million dollars in lost federal money

The federal government requires states to maintain their financial support for libraries each year. This "maintenance of effort" requirement means that the Governor's proposed reduction of \$3,040,000 in four of the five library appropriation lines – including the devastating 50% cut to our State Library – will cause **Pennsylvania to lose at least \$906,000 additional federal funding.**

This loss of Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding will affect local constituents who rely on their public library. Local libraries will see reduced services, fewer available databases, and decreased availability of grants for library improvements. Ironically, this loss of LSTA dollars would come at the very same time when Pennsylvania is trying to secure every nickel possible from Washington.

What Does It All Mean?

In short, reducing the state support for library services by 5.1% reduces services at local libraries and loses about a million federal library services dollars to boot. This **total loss of nearly \$5.7 million** for library services will result in cutbacks that our constituents can ill-afford at a time when expanded library services can help many Pennsylvanians solve some of the problems they face in this economy.

It has been said that no one stretches the public's dollar further than the local librarian. And librarians certainly recognize the reality of added budget pressures during a recession. **But they also recognize the real growing need for library services precisely because of the recession.** That's why Pennsylvania's librarians have not asked for a funding increase but, instead, **level funding in order to meet some part of the rising demand** for hours and access to computers, training classes, current books, publications, and DVDs.

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