

Chairman Gardner, members of the Committee, I am Beverly Cain, State Librarian of Ohio. I am here today to provide testimony on the State Library's proposed budget for Fiscal Years 2018 and 2019.

In 1817 Governor Thomas Worthington recognized the importance of having a state government comprised of educated and well-informed staff and elected officials. To help achieve this, Governor Worthington established the State Library of Ohio to serve the information needs of the young government. 200 years later, helping Ohio's state government stay well-informed on topics including innovations in technology, trends and best practices in public administration, fiscal responsibility, and more, remains as the core service of the State Library. In fact, the vision of the State Library of Ohio is **A Smarter Ohio** where not just state employees, but every Ohioan, can access the necessary resources to be engaged citizens, excel at their jobs, participate in the workforce, and pursue their passions and interests.

The State Library provides a wide range of services to the employees and officials of Ohio's state government, including access to the more than 52 million print and electronic materials in the collections of the State Library and 121 Ohio academic libraries that are members of OhioLINK. Additionally, State Library staff have the expertise necessary to provide high-quality training and one-on-one help to assist state employees with finding and using the resources they need to perform their jobs efficiently and effectively. The State Library serves as the continuous learning center for state employees, serving as a hub for information and relevant education and job training resources. The Department of Administrative Services has recently introduced a new competency-based employee development guide to be used by all state agencies. The guide aligns job-related competencies with training resources to help state employees enhance their job skills and aid supervisors with performance management and succession planning. A key component of this guide is the resources section, which highlights resources available from the State Library of Ohio.

Following several years of significant reductions, GRF funding for the State Library has remained relatively flat since 2012. The Governor's Executive Budget for Fiscal Years 2018 and 2019 recommended flat GRF funding of approximately \$5.9 million for the State Library in each year of the biennium. However, the version of the budget passed by the House reduces the State Library's total GRF funding to slightly more than \$5.1 million for each year of the biennium, a reduction of 13.36%. This would reduce the State Library's operating funds to just \$4.5 million per year, a reduction of 13.57%. It also

reduces GRF funding for Ohio's four Regional Library Systems to a total of just \$500,000 per year, a reduction of 14.16%.

I understand this is a particularly difficult budget and that cuts must be made. The State Library is certainly willing to bear a share of that burden. However, an overall GRF reduction of 13.36% seems disproportionate to House Finance Committee Chairman Ryan Smith's statement that a 1.5% across the board cut was being imposed to better align spending with revised revenue projections. Reductions of this magnitude would be devastating to the State Library and to the Regional Library Systems, which provide direct services and support to public and school libraries across the state.

The State Library of Ohio, on its own and in partnership with other state agencies, libraries, and organizations, administers programs and services that generate an annual savings of at least \$425 million for state agencies, libraries, and Ohio taxpayers. These programs, services, training, and resources are available at no cost to State of Ohio employees, Ohio libraries of all types, and by extension, Ohio residents.

The State Library is the official depository for Ohio state agency publications and serves as Ohio's only full regional depository for federal government documents. State and federal mandates for maintaining these collections ensure continued access to government information. These unique collections of documents form an important historical record of the work of Ohio and federal governments, and contain information that is invaluable to researchers.

The State Library facility has five meeting rooms and an electronic classroom that are available at no cost for use by state agencies. This meeting and training space was used nearly 2,000 times by state agencies between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2016, saving the state nearly \$700,000. State agencies making use of these facilities include the Governor's Office on Workforce Transformation, Attorney General's Office, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, the Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, and the Office of Budget and Management.

The State Library develops partnerships with other institutions and state agencies in order to leverage resources and improve efficiency. The State Library saves state agencies thousands of dollars in mailing costs each year by sending informational materials to public libraries using the Statewide Delivery System. Agencies realizing these savings include the Office of the Secretary of State, the Auditor's Office, and the Attorney General's Office.

The State Library also plays a unique and vital role in providing services to Ohio libraries and maximizes the use of public funds by facilitating resource and information sharing

among Ohio's libraries through programs such as the **Serving Every Ohioan (SEO) Library Consortium**, the **Ohio Digital Library**, and the **Statewide Delivery System**, administered jointly by the State Library and OhioLINK. The Statewide Delivery System supports statewide resource sharing among public libraries and college and university libraries across the state by delivering nearly 9 million books and other library materials to Ohio library users each year.

The proposed reduction in GRF funding for the State Library is particularly worrisome given the current threat to federal funding for libraries. The administration of federal **Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)** funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is a primary responsibility of the State Library. LSTA funds, and the critical programs they support, are now at risk due to the president's proposed budget for discretionary spending in Federal Fiscal Year 2018, which calls for the elimination of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

The State Library of Ohio uses the approximately \$5 million it receives each year in federal LSTA funds in ways that touch every community across the state. The loss of these funds would eliminate or significantly reduce many of the library programs, resources, and services Ohioans use for school, work, lifelong learning, and leisure. LSTA funding has allowed the State Library to maintain a robust program of cost-saving initiatives for Ohio's libraries and Ohioans even while GRF funding has remained relatively flat over an extended period.

Even if the threat of complete elimination of the LSTA program is avoided, a reduction in GRF funding for the State Library could have an adverse impact on our ability to meet federal match and Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements necessary to maintain Ohio's current level of LSTA funding. The current threats to both state and federal funding for the State Library, and the programs it supports, would come at a time when state funding for Ohio's public libraries lacks the stability it needs to ensure that our libraries remain able to innovate, adapt quickly to local needs, and develop programs and services that enable all members of their communities to thrive.

Your packets include information about the many programs and services that could be eliminated or significantly reduced if state and federal funding for the State Library is cut. These include the **Ohio Digital Library**, the **Ohio Talking Books Program**, technology and digital literacy training through **Guiding Ohio Online**, the **Collaborative Summer Library Program**, the **Ohio Web Library**, and the **Serving Every Ohioan Library Consortium**.

Programs and projects facilitated by the State Library are extremely valuable to the residents of Ohio, as evidenced by annual usage data. For example, Ohioans of all

ages used Ohio Web Library databases to retrieve over 15.9 million documents during the eighteen month period from July 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015, and Ohioans borrow more than 600,000 items per year using the Ohio Talking Book Program. Circulation of library materials through the SEO Library Consortium was over 14.5 million items in 2016. Also in 2016, Ohioans downloaded more than 3.3 million eBooks through the Ohio Digital Library.

The **Regional Library Systems (RLS)**, which play a valuable role in supporting Ohio's libraries, have also been adversely impacted by declines in state funding and the diminished capacity of public, school, academic, and special libraries to support the RLS through membership dues and/or fees for continuing education. When libraries and the communities they serve are struggling to meet increased demands with fewer resources, it is even more imperative that the Regional Library Systems are positioned to provide affordable and effective training and development opportunities for library staff.

After years of significant reductions, state funding for the Regional Library Systems has remained flat for a number of years. The House version of the Budget reduces funding for the Regional Library Systems to a total of \$500,000 in each year of the biennium. In order to maintain services at current levels, Regional Libraries would have to increase fees to member libraries at a time when PLF funding for public libraries is set to decrease.

In closing, I respectfully request that GRF funding for the State Library and the Regional Library Systems be returned to the level recommended in the Governor's Executive Budget, minus 1.5% for each. Funding at this level (\$5,128,644 per year in GRF operating funds for the State Library and \$573,732 per year for the Regional Library Systems) would allow both the State Library and the Regional Library Systems to maintain uninterrupted services at or near current levels. Deeper cuts would jeopardize the State Library's ability to meet federal requirements for match and MOE for the receipt of LSTA funds and have a devastating impact on libraries and library services for Ohioans across the state.

Thank you for considering the State Library's budget proposal, which has been carefully developed in an effort to maximize limited state resources to ensure the uninterrupted delivery of critical information resources and services to Ohio government, libraries of all types, and Ohio residents. I will be happy to answer any questions that you might have regarding the State Library and its proposed budget for the next biennium. Thank you.