SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

SENATE TESTIMONY

Sandusky Library - Molly Carver

May 19, 2021

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Gavarone , Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on Substitute House Bill (HB) 110 on behalf of Sandusky Library.

My name is Molly Carver. I am the Executive Director of Sandusky Library, located in Sandusky, Erie County, and part of Senator Gavarone's District 2.

My testimony pertains to the Public Library Fund (PLF) on which Sandusky Library depends for half its annual revenue. The remaining half being collected through local property taxes. Sandusky Library serves populations in Erie County comprised of four school districts, and includes City of Sandusky, Village of Castalia, and Kelleys Island.

Despite the challenges of a pandemic, Sandusky Library continued to provide essential services to the public beyond books, including: Tax forms and online filing, 2020 Census outreach, voter information and registration, expanded Wi-fi access, E-books and other electronic resources, technology training online, food distribution, LinkedIn Learning and other educational opportunities, virtual story time and book discussions. Many of these resources are available online 24/7.

Ohio's 251 public libraries deliver essential services daily to Ohio's residents. As we recover from the impacts of a pandemic, the public needs access to library resources more urgently than ever, including:

- Internet to apply for unemployment, search for jobs, and register for COVID-19 vaccinations,
- Accurate information about health and wellness and a broad spectrum of material,
- Electronic and other resources for small businesses, and
- Books and support materials for students and their parents.

As you work through the budget, remember the value of libraries to your goals of quality education and employment opportunity for all Ohioans.

Of importance to your deliberations is the reality that budget estimates are not revenues, and Ohio's public libraries are not being rescued by federal funding. In fact,

- ***State revenues have failed to reach estimates six of the past seven years in Ohio*, and**
- ***Ohio's public libraries directly receive ZERO funding in the American Rescue Plan Act!***

Libraries - and your constituents - need your action to:

- **Sustain the Public Library Fund at its current level of 1.7% of the General Revenue Fund (GRF)**, and
- **Hold libraries harmless from any changes made to the tax code** that reduce tax receipts to the Public Library Fund. We accept that 1.7% of the GRF can fluctuate with the economic recovery but must not be harmed by formula changes that erode services .

We urge you to secure public library funding in the state budget!

Thank you for your time.