



March 24, 2023

Good morning, my name is Ameer Sword and I am the Director of the Wornstaff Memorial Public Library. I am writing to you about our library's concerns for HB1.

Just to give you a bit of background. The Wornstaff Memorial Public Library opened in 1928. We are an Association Library as a gift of funds was provided to the Village of Ashley and surrounding area by Chesley and Ella Wornstaff in memoriam of their only son Albertus Wornstaff. Wornstaff Library sits in the Village of Ashley, Oxford Township, in Delaware County. Our service area is the boundary of Buckeye Valley School District within Oxford Township. We are the smallest public library in the county and are a part of the COOL (Consortium of Ohio Libraries) which allows us to share resources with 12 other Ohio public libraries.

Our concern is growing about HB1. Any potential reduction of funding causes concern for the library as our revenue is limited. Currently, the library has a 2-mil levy in addition to the Public Library Fund.

The reduction of the tax assessment from 35% to 31.5% will reduce Wornstaff Memorial Public Library's levy proceeds by \$3395. In looking over the budget line items, the impact that would be the least detrimental to our service and facility would be to reduce our expenditures in program supplies and collection. In 2022, our library provided 164 programs and 17,991 physical items were borrowed.

The estimate of \$43 million and \$31 million to the PLF in FY 2024 and FY 2025 provided by the Legislative Service Commission would be more impactful. The Public Library Fund provides 62% of our revenue. The reductions in the budget to offset the reduction from the PLF would be difficult and could impact our service level and facility maintenance. Our facility is aging. As stated, the library was built in 1928 and will celebrate its 95th birthday this year. It has two additions. The first is 40 years old, and the second addition is 30 years old. We are providing regular maintenance to keep everything in working order as well as saving for upgrades. But, emergency costly repairs do occur and must be addressed to keep our facility a safe space for our community members.

While the committee continues to work through all the concerns expressed about the tax reductions, please be mindful of public libraries. A library's role in communities is important and needed. Funding is critical in order for libraries to support their communities. Our funding is critical to our community.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "ameer sword".

Ameer Sword
Director
Wornstaff Memorial Public Library