

Chairman Cirino, Vice Chairman Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Finance Committee, I am the Executive Director of the Ohioana Library, Kimberlee Kiehl, and I would like to provide additional testimony regarding the Ohioana Library funding for Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027.

We appreciate that the requested funding to support our important work has remained steady, and we are grateful for your ongoing support. However, it has come to my attention that the line supporting the Ohioana Library has been moved under the Public Library Fund (PLF) instead of the General Revenue Fund (GRF). I want to provide some context for why we believe the General Revenue fund is the appropriate funding source for the Ohioana Library.

The Ohioana Library Association was founded in 1929 by Martha Kinney Cooper, the wife of then-Governor Myers Cooper. We were founded to permanently preserve books of all genres written or illustrated by Ohioans, as well as books written about Ohio for future generations. Our collection also includes authors' papers, manuscripts, original drawings, and author biographical files. We operate as an archive and research library open to the public, but we do not allow our books to circulate; they must be used onsite. Like the State Library, we are not a public library according to Sections [3375.06](#), [3375.10](#), [3375.121](#), [3375.14](#) of the Ohio Revised Code. The Ohioana Library is defined under Section [3375.61](#) of the Ohio Revised Code.

In addition to hosting the Ohio Book Awards, the second oldest literary award in the country, at the Statehouse each fall, we help researchers and everyday people find items of interest for their work or personal enjoyment. Below are just a few examples of recent requests we have received:

- An architecture firm in New York City reached out looking for a book titled *The Lord was My Client* by Edward J. Schulte. Schulte designed the Cathedral of St. Monica and completely redesigned the Cathedral-Basilica of St. Peter in Chains, both located in Cincinnati. Ohioana was the only location that had a copy of this book.
- A young man comes in periodically to look at county histories and atlases we hold about Tuscarawas, Muskingum, and Belmont counties. He is researching his grandfather to create a complete family tree. Ohioana holds at least one county history and one atlas for every county in Ohio.
- An Ohio woman living in Ohio artist and illustrator Howard Chandler Christy's home in Muskingum County, reached out for biographical information about him. Christy was the winner of Ohioana's 1951 Career Award, and we were able to provide her information from our files.

- Local author Sandra K-Horn regularly visits the library to read our collection of Civil War letters written by T.J. Armstrong to his father. She is using the information as inspiration for her new historical fiction book.

These are just a few examples of the types of requests that Ohioana fulfills for the citizens of Ohio and others across the country. The Public Library Fund (PLF) was created to support Ohio's public libraries as defined under the Ohio Revised Code. Since Ohioana is a research library and archive, we believe it is more appropriate for our funding to come from the General Revenue Fund rather than the Public Library Fund.

I appreciate the chance to provide more information about the work Ohioana does for Ohio citizens and how it differs from the work of public libraries. I respectfully request that the Ohioana Library Association (GRF ALI 350401/PLF ALI 350608) be moved back to the General Revenue Fund.