



LEADING THE ADVANCEMENT OF ALL
MICHIGAN LIBRARIES THROUGH ADVOCACY,
EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

January 9, 2023

Senator
Michigan State Senate
PO Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Senator,

As the new legislative session begins, I want to take a moment to thank you for your past commitment to Michigan libraries and to introduce you to the Michigan Library Association.

Michigan libraries are wonderful centers for learning and self-discovery, providing free and open access to information to all residents. Libraries are simultaneously community centers, tourist destinations, places to read, places to gather and socialize, places to study, and places to learn – cultural institutions in the heart of every community, and every campus, throughout Michigan. Michigan residents love their local and school libraries – more than half of all Michiganders have a library card!

We know that our legislative leaders recognize the vital services that libraries provide in our communities and the importance of innovation, expansion and evolution of library services. If you haven't been to your local library in a few years, you will be surprised that libraries are more than just lenders of books. Libraries offer programs that foster early literacy, entrepreneurship, and lifelong learning. They provide access to high-speed internet, technology and devices to connect to the web, and digital literacy training to help patrons navigate our increasingly digital world. Read more on our information sheet.

We want to make sure that the activities that make our communities the thriving and dynamic places our citizens want to live, work and visit, continue to resonate with you, and that you know about the impact that libraries make, both personally and economically, in the communities you represent.

The State Aid to Public Library Act was adopted in 1977 but we have only recently (2022) reached the .50 cents per capita allotment in State Aid that the act specified. This took 45 years to achieve. Our libraries are also in desperate need of infrastructure improvements after 35 years of no dedicated support. We know you have a lot on your plates, and we are excited to work with you to improve these conditions as our libraries continue to provide access to vital resources for all Michiganders.

On behalf of the 2200 members of the Michigan Library Association, we want to thank you for your continued and ongoing investment in libraries. Michigan residents love their local libraries. We know you do too.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Deborah E. Mikula'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Deborah E. Mikula
Executive Director, Michigan Library Association