

An open letter to the honorable members of the Indiana General Assembly:

The Indiana Library Federation urges reconsideration of the proposed 30% funding cut to the Indiana State Library. While we understand the need for fiscal responsibility during a time of economic uncertainty, the disproportionate reduction significantly exceeds the 5% reduction of other state agencies, threatening essential library services for all Hoosiers. The proposed budget cut is amplifying the impact of the anticipated federal funding decreases from elimination of the Institute of Museum and Library Services and is particularly concerning given the recent \$8 million reduction for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. This perfect storm of funding cuts will severely impair the State Library's critical role in supporting K-12, academic, and public libraries statewide through resource sharing, volume purchasing, and vital statewide services like:

- **INSPIRE:** Invaluable research databases for students and the public.
- **Evergreen Indiana:** Collaborative resource sharing network, especially crucial for rural libraries.
- **Info Express:** Cost-effective interlibrary loan courier service.
- **Indiana Digital Library:** Statewide ebook access via the Libby App.

A 30% cut is not only unbalanced but funding literacy efforts is a public finance imperative. In times of economic hardship, demand for public library services surges—libraries must be fully prepared to respond swiftly to their communities' critical needs. As public libraries prepare for reduced property tax revenue, the Indiana State Library's budget cuts threaten the continuation of vital statewide services that help libraries operate more efficiently and cost-effectively.

The Indiana Library Federation implores the General Assembly to align the State Library's funding reduction with other state agencies. Investing in the State Library is investing in all Hoosiers and empowers all Indiana libraries to better serve their communities.

Respectfully,

Julie Wendorf
President
Indiana Library Federation