



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

B. Parker Hamilton
Director

March 9, 2010

The Honorable James E. DeGrange, Sr.
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Capital Budget Subcommittee

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am writing to request your support of the \$5 million included in the Governor's Fiscal Year 2011 capital budget request for the Public Library Capital Grant Program. Administered by the State Department of Education's Division of Library Development (DLD), the program supports library renovation and construction to address public library needs around the State.

Since the program's inception, Montgomery County has been the recipient of grants to support the renovation of the Gaithersburg Library and the construction of a new library in the Silver Spring community. These two projects have been recommended for additional funding this year: \$600,000 for the Gaithersburg Library and \$250,000 for the new Silver Spring Library.

Several years ago, through the creation of the Public Library Capital Grant Program, the State committed to partnering with local governments to support capital investments in the public libraries. The State recognized that libraries are significant community gathering places, resources for lifelong learning, and settings that contribute to the social, economic, and civic fabric of our communities. Across the State, library buildings are very heavily used by residents. For example, last year in Montgomery County, over nine million library visits were made and residents checked out over 11.8 million items.

Of the two Montgomery County projects recommended for funding in this year's request, the Gaithersburg Library is one of the busiest while the facility in Silver Spring is the second oldest and smallest in the County's library system. The Gaithersburg library renovation will provide an additional 29,956 gross square feet housing more seating, study tables, and collection shelving. It will also serve as a satellite office of

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the Gilchrist Center, which offers activities and services to the County's diverse community. The Silver Spring library project will be a 100,000 plus gross square foot multiuse facility, housing the library, nonprofit arts organization, County Health and Human Services offices and community meeting rooms.

Montgomery County has 20 full service library branches, and the County commits substantial resources to renovate, rebuild, or construct new facilities. The financial assistance the State can provide is very important and greatly appreciated. Therefore, I respectfully request that full funding of the Public Library Capital Grant Program be maintained and that the State's investment in the 13 projects as submitted in the Governor's capital budget request be approved.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "B. Parker Hamilton".

Director