

I am writing to request your support of the \$5 million included in the Governor's Fiscal Year 2012 capital budget request for the Public Library Capital Grant Program.

Since the program's inception, Prince George's County Memorial Library System has been the recipient of matching grants of nearly \$1 million that supported the:

- Largo-Kettering Branch renovation which reconfigured space for better customer service and allowed for the deployment of 15 more public computers, the creation of 2 quiet study rooms and a laptop counter for 10 users.
- just completed renovation of the Greenbelt Branch included: installation of a single ADA-compliant service desk, installation of energy-efficient lighting, an enhanced Children's Area, interior painting, the deployment of 12 more public computers, the creation of a group study room and multiple laptop areas.
- current Spauldings Branch renovations include installation of energy efficient lighting, interior painting and re-carpeting, the installation of new Information and Circulation desks, new ADA-compliant public restrooms, a replacement fire alarm system, an enhanced Children's Area with a story time room, the creation of 2 group study rooms and multiple laptop areas.

Several years ago, by unanimously approving the Public Library Capital Grant Program, the State Legislature committed to partnering with local governments to support capital investments in the public libraries. The Legislature 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 Maryland, library buildings are very heavily used by residents. For example, last year in Prince George's County, nearly five million library visits were made and residents checked out over five million items.

Prince George's County Memorial Library System has 18 library branches, and 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 as submitted in the Governor's capital budget request be approved.

We need the capital grant program now, more than ever.

Sincerely,

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