

March 16, 2010



The Honorable Guy Guzzone  
Education & Economic Development Subcommittee  
206 House Office Building  
6 Bladen St.  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Dear Delegate Guzzone,

Thank you for the opportunity to **oppose the proposed permanent freeze** in State funding for public education through public libraries. With *education so critical to economic development and quality of life*, it is imperative that Maryland's 24 public library systems at least **maintain \$14 per capita in FY11** (we recognize fiscal challenges), **then be raised next year to \$15, and \$16 in FY13, as per Education § 23-504.**

*A major component of Maryland's strong education system alongside the schools, colleges and universities, **public libraries deliver high-quality public education for all ages.*** Our state's libraries are nationally recognized leaders among the great public library systems. Increases in visits, items borrowed, attendance at classes and seminars, and research assistance sessions continue in the 20 percent range statewide.

Public libraries' **educational mission** comprises three pillars (please see image on reverse side):

- I. **Self-Directed Education** through our collections of print materials – from school curriculum titles, to large print titles – and online resources, including *Encyclopedia Americana*, *Access Science*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.
- II. **Research Assistance & Instruction** for individuals and groups. This pillar includes personalized research, as well as classes taught by Library instructors, such as “Solar System Science” for ages 7 to 9 to inspire future scientists, mathematicians and engineers needed to fill BRAC-related jobs, and “Maintain Your Brain,” a health-related seminar for adults. This pillar also includes Live Homework Help, free online tutoring in English, math, and science, for students K-12.
- III. **Instructive & Enlightening Experiences** through cultural and community center concepts, events, and partnerships—such as *A+ Partners in Education* that provides for Kindergarten through college students the best possible chances of overall academic success.

It is our sincere hope that you will **oppose further compromises to education for all**, and will, instead, flat fund public libraries for this year, **leaving intact the scheduled funding increases for public libraries in future years.** In so doing, you will enable continued, outstanding education for everyone—regardless of age, background, or economic means.

Thank you for the many ways you demonstrate your support for Maryland's public libraries.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Valerie J. Gross'.

Valerie J. Gross  
Chief Executive Officer

## PUBLIC LIBRARIES = EDUCATION

### *Three Pillars*

A major component of Maryland’s strong educational system, public libraries deliver **high-quality public education** for all ages. The role of public libraries is best illustrated by the image below, with three pillars that comprise our overall educational program:

- I. **Self-directed Education** through vast collections of items in print, audio and electronic formats; and thousands of online resources (e.g., *Wall Street Journal* and *Access Science*).
- II. **Research Assistance & Instruction** for individuals and groups. This pillar includes classes, seminars and workshops for all ages, taught or facilitated by Library instructors.
- III. **Instructive & Enlightening Experiences** through cultural and community center concepts, events, and partnerships—such as *A+ Partners in Education* and *Choose Civility*.

