CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION
AGENDA ATTACHMENT 4

MEETING DATE: Thursday, May 24, 2012

AGENDA ITEM #: 10

ITEM: REPORT FROM COUNTY LIBRARIAN

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

None.
Commissioner Smith (District IV) suggested that the Commission address the current State Library funding issues and have the Chair submit letters as appropriate.
Senator Carol Liu, Chair  
Senate Subcommittee Number 1 on Education Finance  
State Capitol, Room 5061  
Sacramento CA 95814  

Re: Restore Library Funding  

May 10, 2012  

Dear Senator Liu and members of the Senate Subcommittee Number 1 on Education Finance,  

On behalf of the Contra Costa County Library community, I am writing to request that the $15.2 million in library funding be restored to the 2012-13 budget. As you know, these funds help support:  

- Literacy programs to teach adults how to read. Literate adults become employable and can contribute to California’s economy. More than 20,000 literacy learners receive services annually from our libraries, with another 3,000 adults on the waiting list.  
- Resource sharing (books and other material) between libraries. Due to reduced funding, some libraries are now charging out-of-area residents a fee to borrow material. Resource sharing reduces a library’s costs, as its customers can obtain the material they need from another library.  
- Operating funds to help maintain open hours, providing a safe place for students to do homework when their school library is closed.  

Without these funds California would be one of the largest states in the country without state-supported funding. In addition, the elimination of California’s “maintenance of effort” library funding jeopardizes more than $15 million in matching Federal funds, resulting in the closing of the Braille and Talking Book Library in 2013.  

A winter Contra Costa Times Article (2/10/12) noted that the largest educational achievement gaps in the USA are no longer between ethnic and racial groups but between high- and low-income students across the board. Libraries are a free and invaluable educational resource for everyone, but especially for students from lower-income families, who visit their libraries for access to computers, study help, books, and periodicals. If you support education, it follows that you would also support libraries. We appreciate your past support and hope that you will continue this effort.  

More than one million Californians use their libraries daily; please do not deprive us of this vital resource. Thank you very much for your consideration.  

Sincerely,  

[Signature]  

Lynn A. Meisch  
Chair, Contra Costa County Library Commission, and Walnut Creek Commissioner  

cc: Senator Ted Gaines,  
Member, Senate Budget Subcommittee Number 1 on Education Finance  
State Capitol, Room 5061  
Sacramento CA 95814  

Senator Rod Wright  
Member, Senate Budget Subcommittee Number 1 on Education Finance  
State Capitol, Room 5064  
Sacramento, CA 95814
Letter to the Editor

alan smith

to:

05/18/2012 07:20 AM

From: alan smith <alanbsmith@sbcglobal.net>

To: ckelly@ccllib.org

Don't let Brown cut libraries for the blind

Does Gov. Jerry Brown believe that all Californians should be able to read? Does this include the blind and physically handicapped?

Well, it appears he does not think so, because based on his budget, the state's Braille and Talking Book Library and the Braille Institute library in Los Angeles will close in 2013 due to his veto of funding and no provision for funding in the 2012-13 budget. These libraries are a window into the world.

If readers believe that all should be able to read, please write to the governor and demand that he restore the funding. Do not doom the visually impaired and physically handicapped to a world of darkness.
Alan B. Smith
4823 Boxer Blvd.
Concord Ca 94521

May 18. 2012

The Honorable Edmond G. Brown Jr.
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, Room 1173
Sacramento CA 95814

Subject: Preserve Braille and Talking Book Library

Dear Governor Brown:

Do you believe that all Californians should be able to read? Does this include the blind and physically handicapped?

Well it appears you do not think so, because based on your budget the state’s Braille and Talking Book Library and the Braille Institute library in Los Angeles will close in 2013 due to your veto of funding and no provision for funding in the 2012-13 budget.

These libraries are a “window onto the world”. If you believe That All Should Be Able to Read, please restore the funding for both FY 2011-12 and 2012-13. Do not doom the visually impaired and physically handicapped to a world of darkness. Thank you.

Sincerely

Alan B. Smith
925.825.5575

Cc:

The Honorable Darrell Steinberg
Senate President pro Tempore
State capitol, Room 205
Sacramento CA 95814

The Honorable Bob Huff
Senate Republic Leader
State Capitol, Room 305
Sacramento CA 95814
The Honorable Mark Leno
Chair, Senate Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 5100
Sacramento CA 95814

The Honorable Bill Emmerson
Vice Chair, Senate Budget committee
State Capitol, Room 4082
Sacramento CA 95814

The Honorable John A Perez
Speaker of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 212
State Capitol, CA 95814

The Honorable Connie Conway
Republican Assembly Leader
State Capitol, Room 3104
Sacramento CA 95814

The Honorable Bob Blumenfield
Chair, assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento CA 95814

The Honorable Jim Nielson
Vice Chair Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6031
Sacramento CA 95814
YOUR HELP IS NEEDED - CONTACT LEGISLATIVE LEADERS TO SAVE LIBRARY BUDGET FUNDING

May 15, 2012

TO: CLA MEMBERS/ SYSTEMS/ NETWORK CONTACT

FROM: Mike Dillon, CLA Lobbyist and Christina DiCaro, CLA Lobbyist

RE: News From The Capitol

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED - CONTACT LEGISLATIVE LEADERS TO SAVE LIBRARY BUDGET FUNDING

As reported yesterday, due to the state’s $15.7 billion deficit, the Governor’s May Revision of the State Budget does not contain any proposed funding for public libraries – most specifically, there is no funding in the State Budget for the California Library Services Act, nor the Public Library Foundation, nor the state literacy services program. Because of this situation, not only are these programs in jeopardy, but so is approximately $16 million in federal funding.

CLA members, trustees, friends groups, literacy advocates, and the UCLA students are to be commended for your letter-writing efforts and participation in the “Time In the District” events with legislators. The 8 members of the Assembly and Senate Budget Subcommittees on Education Finance each received several hundreds of letters, and these same legislators were very supportive of the public library funding issues when they were heard recently in subcommittee.

We need your help once again! Now begins the next phase of Budget negotiations, where it will be essential to impress upon members of the legislative leadership how important it is to preserve vital library services. The Budget Subcommittees will be closing out their work next week (by approximately May 24 or slightly after that) and the Chairs (Assemblywoman Bonilla and Senator Liu) will be working very closely with the Leadership and the Chairs of the larger full Budget Committees in each house.

CLA will continue to request that these leaders restore $15.2 million in funding for public libraries in the State Budget – an action that will protect a corresponding $16 million in federal funds. A one page summary describing some of the important highlights of each program can be found here. Please feel free to use it as a resource when writing your letters to the legislators listed below. (If you have already sent a letter(s) to the members of the Budget Subcommittee, simply use the body of that letter and merely change out the addressees.) Public libraries will be competing with other areas that have been hard hit by the Budget cuts over the last few years, such as health and human services, trial courts, etc. so please indicate what you feel will be some of the negative effects should these library programs cease to exist (e.g. literacy programs will shut down and thousands of adult learners will go unserved, the regional system of sharing resources will disintegrate and libraries may choose to implement an expensive non-resident library card fee, etc.) Please take a moment today to write the following legislators. Deadline for these letters ideally, is Thursday, May 24, although letters after that date will still be effective. Thank you for your help!

Send your letters to:

The Honorable Darrell Steinberg
Senate President pro Tempore
State Capitol, Room 205
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 323-2263

The Honorable Bob Huff
Senate Republican Leader
State Capitol, Room 305
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 324-0922

The Honorable John A. Perez
Speaker of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 219
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 319-2146

The Honorable Connie Conway
Assembly Republican Leader
State Capitol, Room 3104
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 319-2134

The Honorable Bob Blumenfield
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 319-2140

The Honorable Mark Leno
Chair, Senate Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 5100
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 445-4722

The Honorable Bill Emmerson
Vice Chair, Senate Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 4082
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 327-2187

The Honorable Jim Nielsen
Vice Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6031
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 319-2102
Dear California Librarians, Library Staff and Library Supporters!

WANT TO SAVE LIBRARY FUNDING IN THE STATE BUDGET? IN LESS THAN THREE MINUTES YOU CAN “CLICK AND SEND” A LETTER TO A LEGISLATOR!

CLA has made it easy for grass roots advocates to send a quick email letter to some of the key decision-makers at the State Capitol. Library supporters need to convince legislators to include $15.2 million in funding for three critical programs in the State Budget – the California Library Services Act, the Library Literacy Services program, and the Public Library Foundation.

Some of you may already be sending letters on letterhead to the legislators highlighted in a May 15th report from our lobbyists – and that is great! But, if time is a factor for you, CLA has developed a special sample letter that you can send to four legislators by clicking on the contact links below! First, download the sample letter on the CLA website using the provided link. Then, click one of the Legislator contact links below, copy and paste the sample letter into the body of the webform, fill out the remaining required personal contact information and send it off to the State Capitol with only a few clicks of your mouse. (Repeat the process for each legislator of course!) This will make reaching out to legislative leaders easy and effortless. Remember, time is of the essence – click and advocate today!

Sample 2012 Letter to Legislators On Library Funding
http://www.cla-net.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=140

The Honorable Bob Blumenfield, Assembly Budget Committee Chair
http://lcmspubcontact.lc.ca.gov/PublicLCMS/ContactPopup.php?district=AD40&

The Honorable Mark Leno, Senate Budget Committee Chair
http://sd03.senate.ca.gov/contact

The Honorable John A. Perez, Speaker of the California State Assembly
http://asmdc.org/speaker/email-john-a-perez

The Honorable Darrell Steinberg, Senate President pro Tem – California State Senate
http://sd06.senate.ca.gov/contact

http://www.cla-net.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=140

Thanks!

Carol Simmons, Executive Director
California Library Association
May 14, 2012

TO: CLA MEMBERS/ SYSTEMS/ NETWORK CONTACTS

FROM: Mike Dillon, CLA Lobbyist
       Christina DiCaro, CLA Lobbyist

RE: News From the Capitol

GOVERNOR RELEASES “MAY REVISION” OF BUDGET – POOR REVENUES MEAN NO SUPERISE FUNDING FOR LIBRARIES

This morning in a press conference at the State Capitol, Governor Jerry Brown released his “May Revision” of the 2012-13 Budget and somberly announced, “I'm laying out some pretty tough cuts.” The “May Revise,” as it is also known, allows the Governor to make adjustments to his January Budget, after having received the latest cash receipts and projections for the economy. While there had been hope for a slight uptick in the economy during the first few months of the year, unfortunately the state’s tax receipts lagged much more than originally projected. In the “Revise” document released this morning, the Governor notes that while the January Budget estimated a $9.2 billion deficit, the revised Budget “problem has increased to $15.7 billion as a result of a reduced revenue outlook, higher costs to fund schools, and decisions by the federal government and courts to block budget cuts.” Specifically, a notation in the Governor’s May Revise states, “Prior Revenue Forecast Was Too High ($4.3 billion) – Finance’s January forecast was too reliant on strong April and June 2011 receipts, which have now been wiped out by weak financial payments received in April 2012. The May Revision continues to project a modest economic recovery.”

Because of the daunting Budget deficit, there was no money put back into the revised Budget to fund the California Library Services Act, the Public Library Foundation, nor the state literacy program. (Incidentally, all information relating to this level of detail in the Budget was embargoed by the Department of Finance for several hours after the release of the May Revise, until the Governor held a second press conference in Los Angeles at 2 p.m.) Today’s news from the Governor’s office continues to mean that the Budget contains no state funding for public libraries. Over the next few days and weeks, we will be endeavoring to get funding put in to the Budget on the Assembly side, as well as the Senate side. The state must show a specific level of support for public libraries or they will risk losing approximately $16 million in
federal funding -- the funding of which goes to support important programs such as the Braille and Talking Books program. We will need your help once again!

To address the $15.7 billion shortfall, the cuts that the Governor and his Director of Finance presented this morning included large reductions to In Home Support Services, Cal Grants, Cal Works, proposes delaying 38 state projects to use that money for trial courts instead, and it taps $1.4 billion in redevelopment funds (low income housing). Uniquely, the Governor also suggests a 5% pay cut for state workers, as well as a plan to shut state offices one day a week. The Governor very clearly indicated that he was linking his May Revision plan “with a plea to the voters to increase the income and sales tax temporarily,” which is embodied in an initiative that he has been spearheading, and which will appear on the November ballot. If successful, the Governor's tax initiative is anticipated to generate approximately $8.5 billion. The Governor’s Revise also suggests a list of “trigger” cuts to help balance this Budget, similar to that which was used last year, if the November tax package is not approved by the voters.

The Governor noted that he had met with Assembly Speaker Perez and Senate President pro Tem Steinberg last night to discuss his plans for the May Revision. A reporter asked the Governor if he had the support of the Democrat leaders for his plan, and then further asked what did he think would be the tone of the negotiations going forward. The Governor replied, “I expect them to be difficult and challenging. There will be tense moments before we all get this resolved. We had an amicable meeting last night.” The legislature is required to send a balanced Budget to the Governor by June 15th, and time for deliberating the Budget will be compressed with the June 5th elections looming.

IMPORTANT: Tomorrow we will send you instructions on next steps and we will identify the key legislators that we would like you to write to in this next phase of grass roots advocacy on the Budget. The Budget Subcommittees each received several hundreds of letters from library advocates, and the legislators were very complimentary of your efforts. We hope we can count on you one more time to make another big push to protect library funding in the Budget.

Thanks,

Carol Simmons, Executive Director
California Library Association
2471 Flores Street
San Mateo, CA 94403
csimmons@cla-net.org
650-376-0886 (ph)
650-539-2341 (fax)
www.cla-net.org
The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, Room 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

March 27, 2012

Subject: Restore and Maintain Library Funding

Dear Governor Brown,

On behalf of the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce members, we urge you to restore and preserve library funding that was cut in December 2011 through the state "budget trigger".

Library programs provide access to resources for residents to improve their business skills enabling them to advance in the workplace. For example, libraries provide job seekers on-line resources to research and apply for work. They provide literacy programs for individuals to become proficient in communication skills. Furthermore, libraries support intellectual development and reinforce our educational public school system. Restoring $15.2 million in state wide funding will ensure the continuance of self-development resources, as well as, maintain a federally funded match (Federal Library Services and Technology Act) for libraries.

Federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds provide funding for literacy programs, the Braille and Talking Books Program, a statewide Summer Reading Program for children and teens to prevent "summer slide" in reading ability and other vitally important public library programs.

Over 1,000,000 Californians use a library each day. A strong California economy needs strong public libraries. Please restore library funding for the 2012-2013 budget cycle.

Sincerely,

Ken Dami
Chairman of the Board