



*Promoting all libraries in Indiana and fostering the professional growth of our members*

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## **Comments on HB1001, Request for Increased Funding for Internet Connectivity for Indiana's Libraries and Schools and Stable Funding for INSPIRE databases**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HB1001, specifically related to two items that help Hoosiers through Indiana's libraries. Indiana Library Federation includes about 2,000 members across the state in all types of libraries—public, school, academic and special libraries.

### **Internet connectivity for libraries and schools**

The State Budget includes a line item to reimburse libraries for partial costs of internet connectivity. Indiana's public libraries and schools provide access for students and residents who live in areas of the state without access to broadband and to those who cannot afford it.

An increase to \$5.5 million for internet connectivity in the State's biennial budget for libraries would benefit Hoosiers in library internet connectivity to best practice standards based on the population, bandwidth and usage. Recognizing the limitations of the State Budget, Indiana Library Federation advocates *a phased approach* to \$5.5 million to achieve needed internet connectivity for libraries.<sup>[1]</sup> A modest increase this year would be a great step in the direction of meeting the demand.

### **Stable funding for INSPIRE**

INSPIRE is supported by the Indiana General Assembly through Build Indiana Funds and other sources and is managed by the Indiana State Library. The INSPIRE databases are a demonstrated cost-effective resource used by schools, libraries and the public to access academic resources, testing and career center, teaching books for early literacy and Rosetta Stone.

Due to efficiencies and a contract that locked in the cost for three years, a stable request for funding of INSPIRE will maintain these important databases. Indiana Library Federation advocates for continued, stable funding support for INSPIRE databases used by schools, libraries, colleges, universities and residents.

We sincerely appreciate the Indiana General Assembly's support of Indiana's libraries. We appreciate your recognition of the importance of libraries in education, workforce development and community.

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The Indiana Library Federation is the statewide association for academic, public, school and special libraries. Our highest policy priorities for 2017 include:

- Increased funding for library and school internet connectivity in the state budget.
- Stable funding for INSPIRE databases in state budget.
- Effective libraries and certified librarians in K-12 education.

We also support expanded broadband coverage, adult and early literacy, expansion of library service to unserved areas and merger of the Indiana Historical Bureau into the Indiana State Library. See our 2017 Policy Priorities at [www.ilfonline.org](http://www.ilfonline.org).

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<sup>[1]</sup> Currently, the ALA best practice standards for connectivity are 100Mbps for communities of less than 50,000 and 1Gbps for communities above 50,000. According to 2015 Indiana library statistics, only 8 libraries meet that goal. Source: 2015 Indiana Public Library Statistics Internet Access and Computers, via [www.in.gov/library](http://www.in.gov/library)