



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

Action requested 4/5/17

Contacting your State Senator and State Representative about why a modest increase is needed to support Internet Connectivity in Indiana's Libraries and Schools

- 1) **Prepare your story**—“Internet use in my library is needed for....” “The library is the only place in my community where the residents access the internet for job applications, e-government and online homework.” “My library cannot keep up with demand for the internet because....” “Last year, my library received \$____, which was a fraction of the cost to meet the need for internet.”
- 2) **Find your State Senator and Representative at <https://iga.in.gov/legislative/find-legislators/>**
- 3) **Ask** – Please contact your State Representative and State Senator and ask for a modest increase in state budget funding for internet for schools and libraries (as was included in the House Budget).
 - If by **phone or in person**, explain that you want to respectfully request that the final version of the state budget include a modest increase for internet connectivity for schools and libraries, as was included in the House version of the budget, HB1001. Simply explain how the consumers in your library/school rely on the internet and how this funding makes a difference in your library.
 - If you **talk to his/her assistant**, explain that you are a constituent OR that you serve her constituents in ____ County. Explain something to the effect that “Please let him/her know that the libraries and schools in his district benefit from the internet connectivity funds in the budget. Please ask him/her to consider increasing the amount to the levels as provided in the House version of the budget. He/she is welcome to contact me at ____ to learn how our community relies on our internet availability at the library.”
 - If you **hit voice mail or send an email**, remember that many legislators share legislative assistants. Leave a simple message such as: “My name is ____ and my telephone number is (###) ###-####. I work at ____ Library and I wanted to respectfully request Sen./Rep. ____’s support for increased funding for internet connectivity for schools and libraries in the budget bill, HB1001. I can share more about how constituents rely on our library internet. Thank you.” If he/she calls you back personally, have a quick conversation and invite him/her to visit to see the need. Thank him/her for his support of libraries.

Background on 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.

The House increased the annual budget by \$1M for schools and \$500K for libraries in support of internet connectivity. This modest increase would take a step toward meeting best practice standards based on the population, bandwidth and usage. Recognizing the limitations of the State Budget, Indiana Library Federation has advocated a *phased approach* to \$5.5 million to achieve needed internet connectivity for libraries.^[1] The *increase included in the House version of the budget* is a great step in the direction of meeting the demand. We respectfully request that the Senate maintain or increase this amount.

Note: Both the House and Senate versions of the budget include Stable funding for INSPIRE.

^[1] 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