



April 24, 2018

The Honorable Joseph Donnelly  
United States House of Representatives  
720 Hart Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Sen. Donnelly:

On behalf of our nearly 2,000 individual and institutional members and the 6,000 employees of libraries in Indiana, we thank you for your past support of libraries and for your support for federal funding. We sincerely appreciate your signing on to the Dear Appropriator letter. As you are aware, the White House FY 2019 budget proposal eliminates the majority of federal library funding, including funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). We appreciate your continued support for the education, workforce, and economic development needs of Americans by providing \$186.6 million for the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) in the fiscal year 2019 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill.

Allow this letter to serve as additional information about how this important funding is used in Indiana. Hoosiers rely on school, public and academic libraries for free access to essential information on a wide range of topics, skills training, computers and the Internet. Nearly one in six Hoosiers lives in an area without broadband service. Many more Hoosiers cannot afford it even where it is available. Internet access is critical at a time when applications for many job applications and government services are completed online. Indiana's libraries provide access to digital resources, as well as print resources and trained staff.

Each year, LSTA grants provide approximately \$3 million to statewide, Indiana-specific projects and sub-grants in every congressional district. Indiana officials, not the federal government, decide how best to use LSTA funds to promote innovation, lifelong learning research and access to information for Hoosiers. Indiana is required to provide a 1/3 match for LSTA funding, which means that **a cut in federal support would likely result in a cut to critical programs such as resource sharing, access for people with disabilities, early childhood literacy and technology.**

The administration's budget proposal also cuts funding for the Department of Education's Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) program, which helps school libraries provide books, materials, and training focused on serving students in vulnerable communities across our country. While Indiana has not received recent grants, IAL funds are the only dedicated source of federal funding for school libraries.

We understand the pressures to fund many important programs. We hope you will value the important role federal funds play in matching state dollars to serve Hoosiers. Libraries are critical to supporting an informed and educated citizenry to our democracy and economy. Children and adults depend on their local libraries to help them access information and the internet, prepare for and succeed in school, apply for jobs, learn new skills and so much more.

Allow us to share specifically how a few of the **statewide projects funded with LSTA grants** benefit Hoosiers:

- Cost-effective resource sharing – LSTA funds provide support to INSPIRE, the state's virtual library; Evergreen, a shared inter-library loan system; and Statewide Circulation Remote Services.
- Access for people with disabilities and the homebound – LSTA grants supports statewide services to the blind and physically impaired, in the form of the Talking Books and Braille Library.

Continued next page

*Indiana Library Federation leads, educates and advocates to advance library services for the benefit of Indiana residents.*

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- Early Childhood Literacy – LSTA supports storytime kits, summer reading, early literacy computers and other programming for children and teens.
- Technology – LSTA grants support competitive subgrants for innovations in local communities.
- Digitization – LSTA funds continue the digitization of Indiana’s historical records and cultural heritage, which are made available via the internet to all.
- Additionally, subgrants were awarded specifically to benefit residents in each of the nine Congressional Districts.

We offer a standing invitation for you to visit school, public or academic libraries to see the critical role libraries play in education, employment and quality of life.

The work that libraries do is ongoing and valuable. **Thank you for YOUR support for our libraries and the communities in signing on to the "Dear Appropriator" letters for LSTA for IAL.**

Should you or your staff have questions about libraries or how federal funds are used, please do not hesitate to contact Lucinda Nord, executive director, of Indiana Library Federation at 317-257-2040, ext. 101. She can also arrange a visit to libraries.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

/s/  
Edra Waterman  
Hamilton East Public Library  
ILF Board President

/s/  
Susie Highley  
Indiana Middle Level Educators  
ILF Board President-Elect

/s/  
David Peter, PhD  
Vincennes University, retired Dean  
ILF Board Past-President