

Testimony Regarding Proposed Budget Cuts to Library Programs
3/2/15

I am writing to express my deep dismay with the governor's proposed cuts to library services and programs. As a teacher librarian for the past 15 years I can personally attest to the indispensable services offered by CLC in particular. The cost savings for a variety of products is incredibly important, especially in this current climate of under funding from the State of Connecticut to local school districts. As we have seen our school library budgets fail to keep up with needs and services to students in public schools (and more money siphoned off to charter and magnet schools) the repercussion of cutting the state library services is completely short-sighted. Many of my colleagues and I have benefited from professional development, library roundtables, reduced costs of databases, etc. offered through CLC. In turn, we then are able to provide our students with the a library program supported by best practices and current research.

As a regular patron of the town library here in Newtown I constantly find the inter-library loan program (Connecticard) yet another invaluable service. Not every library has the ability or means to acquire materials for every single patron's needs; why not have a sharing system such as Connecticard so that limited town budgets can be used for the myriad of needs and purposes unique to each library in Connecticut.

Libraries are the great equalizers of a democracy. It's a small price to pay to ensure that every Connecticut towns' population is served by a high quality library system. I'll end with this quote from one of my favorite writers, Neil Gaiman.

"A library is a place that is a repository of information and every citizen access to it. That includes health information. And mental health information. It's a community space. It's a place of safety, a haven from the world."

Please reconsider these cuts to the budget.

Thank you,
Geraldine Carley
Newtown, CT