



**TOWN OF MANSFIELD
MANSFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY**

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Appropriations Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2700
Hartford, CT 06106

Testimony re Governor's Bill No. 942, AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE BUDGET
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GOVERNOR CONCERNING EDUCATION

March 3, 2015

To the Members of the Committee:

Connecticut has many small libraries serving their communities with budgets that would be sorely impacted by the elimination of funding for Connecticard, the Connecticut Library Consortium (CLC) and Grants to Public Libraries. Public libraries are an indispensable part of each community, and they are especially needed by our citizens in hard economic times.

Libraries have been at the forefront of regional cooperation for many years, leveraging tax dollars to expand access to many collections and services. Connecticard reimbursements support significant regional services, and their loss would have serious repercussions to library services now and in the future.

The annual Public Library Grant helps each library provide basic services at the local level so that they may more fully participate in Connecticard, allowing public libraries to offer more materials and services to their communities.

CLC provides training, material sharing, expertise, and discounts to member libraries. The bargaining power of CLC expands the purchasing power of each library. For example, Baker and Taylor (a book and media vendor) offers 46.6% off trade books to Connecticut libraries because of the multi-year contract negotiated by CLC. A library purchasing with that discount can afford to buy almost twice the number of books for its collection!

Libraries provide many services, such as access to books, music, film, free Internet, early childhood literacy services, lifelong learning programs for adults, tax and other government forms, job search assistance, reference help and more. Maintaining these services would be impossible with the legislation under consideration. These relatively small grants are vital to support these basic services, and promote regional cooperation to the betterment of everyone

in Connecticut. Our communities will suffer this coming year, and for many years to come should this legislation pass.

If the provisions in Governor's Bill No. 942, AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GOVERNOR CONCERNING EDUCATION that repeal these programs are enacted, new legislation would be required before these programs could ever be funded again. The public library is the most democratic institution in our society; anyone is welcome and all are served. Please do not take this funding away from your public libraries!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leslie B. McDonough". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Leslie" being the most prominent.

Leslie B. McDonough
Director
Mansfield Public Library

cc: Matthew Hart, Town Manager