



**Testimony of Kendall Wiggin
State Librarian
Connecticut State Library
Concerning Senate Bill 942
“An Act Implementing The Budget Recommendations Of The Governor
Concerning Education”
March 3, 2015**

The State Library is very concerned about various provisions in SB 942 which would repeal 3 important statewide library programs as well as the Connecticut Humanities Grant programs.

Grants to Public Libraries established in 1967

Sections 31, 33, 34, 35, 36 relate to the elimination of the Grants to Public Libraries program.

The state has been providing incentive funding to public libraries since 1893. Through this state and local partnership, residents of Connecticut have benefited from a very efficient and effective system of independently operated public libraries working in close cooperation. Eliminating these sections eliminate "principal public libraries" and the requirements that principal public libraries receive adequate local funding; provide equal access to all residents; don't charge residents for library services; participate in Connecticutcard; and submit annual statistics to the State Library.

The Connecticutcard Program.

Sections 33 and 36 relate to the elimination of the Connecticutcard Program.

For 42 years Connecticut citizens have directly benefited from this program by being able to freely borrow books and other library materials from any public library in the state. Under this program the State Library reimburses towns for loans made to non-residents. All funding goes directly to the local library. This program has been a model of regional resource sharing.

The Cooperating Library Service Unit Program (CLSU) established in 1988.

Section 36 repeals the CLSU program, but Section 32 defines a CLSU for purposes of representation on the Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development.



In 2003, the four CLSUs were merged into the Connecticut Library Consortium (CLC). The four boards determined that one statewide cooperative would provide greater efficiencies and savings to all of Connecticut's libraries. Repeal of this statute would leave no organization in the state with the mandate to develop programs too costly or impractical for a single library to maintain.

Grant programs for local humanities institutions

Section 36 repeals the grant program for local humanities institutions and the cultural heritage development account.

Repeal of these sections would eliminate grants and support services for local institutions in the humanities, including libraries, museums and historical and cultural societies and associations.

Since Section 36 repeals the statutes for these programs by reference, the programs and their relevant statutes are:

- CGS section 11-9e (cooperating library service units)
- CGS sections 11-31a to 31c (Connecticard)
- CGS sections 11-24b (Grants to Public Libraries)
- CGS sections 10-373aa and 10-373bb (Connecticut Humanities Grants)

I urge the Committee to not move forward with the repeal of these highly effective programs.