



2018 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

The Florida Library Association's mission is to promote excellence in and strongly advocate for Florida libraries. Florida's libraries provide our residents with essential services, are critical to the overall state economy, and serve as a foundation for all levels of education. Providing a proper level of state funding for services and operations as well as additional funds for expansion and innovation will make Florida more economically competitive and give residents the educational tools necessary to succeed. These are the legislative priorities of the Florida Library Association (FLA):

Funding for Public Libraries

State Aid to Public Libraries – Increase funding to \$32,098,834

Restore funding levels to Public Libraries that provide appropriate levels of investment in innovation and community services. We seek to increase current funding of \$23,098,834, with additions to general funding for the following projects that are fundamental in addressing critical needs delivered by library services.

Restore funding levels to Public Libraries that provide appropriate levels of investment in innovation and community services. We seek to incrementally increase current funding of \$23,098,834 over the next five years, with additions to general funding for the following projects that are fundamental in addressing critical needs delivered by library services. By 2022, State Aid should be restored to a minimum of \$33,000,000, which was the 2001 level.

Innovative Initiatives - \$2,000,000

FLA supports establishing a competitive grant program for innovative library services administered by the Division of Library and Information Services (DLS). With these funds, libraries can innovate their service delivery models to incorporate workforce readiness, economic development support, STEM learning, and community engagement spaces.

Public Library Construction - \$8,500,000

The grants requested by the 2018-2019 DLS for Public Library Construction provide local jobs and funds for critical infrastructure upgrades including those that address new technology in libraries, renovation, and expansion, serving as a stimulus to local governments.

Multi-Type Library Cooperatives (MLCs) - \$2,000,000

FLA supports an appropriation of \$2,000,000 to again fully fund the Library Cooperative Grant Program. MLCs reduce costs for libraries by promoting resource sharing and by providing technology and library services training to over 16,000 library staff annually. These funds maintain Florida's online database of library collections, making resource sharing possible through interlibrary loan.

Smart Horizons Career Online High School - \$2,500,000

The program allows 19-and-older out of school adults to complete a private high school diploma and career certificate through 25 participating library systems. In **October 2017**, **255** students had graduated, **with a total of 939 students enrolled over two years**. Several libraries report very satisfactory success and interest. FLA supports continued funding for this program making a high school diploma available to more Floridians and preparing them for success in the workforce.

Funding for Academic Libraries

State University and College Libraries – Increase FALSC E-Resources funding to \$8,000,000

Academic libraries are essential for student success, faculty research, and accreditation. FLA supports increased funding for statewide library e-resources through the Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative (FALSC). E-resources are a cornerstone of affordable education. Student success depends on access to high quality, scholarly e-resources across all academic disciplines. It is essential that funding for them be increased as costs rise.

Policy Issues

Library Instructional Materials

A new Florida state law allows parents, and any residents, to challenge the use of textbooks and instructional materials they find objectionable via an independent hearing. FLA monitors the use of this law by citizens to challenge materials selected by professional educators and librarians.

School Library Media Centers: FLA endorses the Florida Association for Media in Education restoration of professional instruction by a certificated school library media specialist in school library media centers in all school districts.

Background on Florida Libraries

51% of Floridians have a library card and they checked out an average of 6 books per person in 2014. Floridians visited their public library 75.1 million times in person and made 97.3 million virtual visits! A 2013 survey commissioned by the Florida Department of State found that public libraries provide a \$10.81 return on every dollar invested.

State Library of Florida, Department of State – Ongoing Funding

FLA supports continued funding for the Division of Library and Information Services, its programs and services in the Department of State.

Bureau of Braille and Talking Books

FLA supports continued financial support for the Bureau of Braille and Talking Book Service to provide quality library services to all eligible residents of Florida, as one of the largest populations of sight-impaired individuals in the United States.

Department of Correction Library Services

The Florida Library Association supports continued funding for correctional libraries

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