

## Vision

*The Florida Library Assoc. champions strong, indispensable, user-focused Florida libraries that exceed the expectations of the communities and constituents they serve.*

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

## Mission

*The Florida Library Association is a statewide organization that promotes excellence in Florida libraries by advocating strongly for libraries and providing high quality professional and leadership development for a diverse community of library staff, volunteers, and supporters.*

Florida Library Association

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# Keep Public Libraries *Public*

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The Florida Library Association asserts that policymaking and management of public libraries should remain securely in the public domain. This brochure provides information on why public libraries should be administered and managed by local non-corporate entities.



# ♥ YOUR LIBRARY

## Libraries Transform

With traditional materials, e-books, equipment, tools & instruments, and tech-based resources, libraries are transforming their communities by fostering education, literacy, employment, entrepreneurship, engagement and empowerment.



## Reasons to Avoid Privatization

- ◇ Public libraries are accountable to the public for the money they spend and the way they operate. They are governed by officials who answer to the voters. Private companies answer to the need to make a profit.
- ◇ Private companies must make a profit. In searching for ways to save money there is the risk that assets degrade, hours are reduced, workers hired who lack the necessary training or experience needed to provide quality library service.
- ◇ The control of public assets is a trust that must be managed for the long-term interests of the community, not driven by private commercial interests, or the personal positions or beliefs of the company's owners or share holders.
- ◇ A privately controlled library may not be aware of, or potentially sensitive to, the needs of the community in terms of providing services and information.
- ◇ The local community, through trustees or local policy makers should govern the library. When decisions about library service, operations, and budget are transferred from the public sector to a private, for-profit company, will a private company be receptive to community feedback?

What local policy makers and officials might want to consider when thinking about privatizing the local public library.

- ◆ Can a private company maintain the level of public trust earned by the library?
- ◆ Can and will the library director of a privatized library always make operational decisions that are in the best interest of the community, even if those decisions reduce or do not make a profit?
- ◆ How will the private company influence the development of the library's collection of materials?
- ◆ Does the relationship between a public library and its community change when it is privatized?
- ◆ Will the library be able to receive grants from foundations or solicit donations if it is managed by a for-profit company and will Friends groups raise money for a local library if it is privatized?
- ◆ Does the proposed contract include costs to fully manage the library—for example, the costs of rent, building and ground maintenance, and utilities?