



March 4, 2011

CALL TO ACTION:

Libraries are facing a ‘perfect storm’ of funding cuts by the State Legislature- statewide and local library services are at risk.

Ask your legislators to protect Michigan libraries through sufficient funding from all legally required funding sources. Tell them losing 76 percent of library funding is more than sharing the sacrifice.

- The Governor’s budget calls for a 40% cut in state aid to libraries. This is on top of a 40% cut two years ago.
- The Governor has called for ‘shared sacrifice’ but since 2000 state aid to libraries has been reduced by 76%.
- In addition to state aid, the state legislature is gutting library funding through elimination of renaissance zone reimbursements, diversion of penal fines, diversion of dedicated millages to tax capture authorities and possibly elimination of personal property tax.
- We support the Governor’s call for elimination of tax credits like renaissance zones. State law calls for libraries to be reimbursed for these credits but the reimbursement was eliminated in 2010.

Gov. Snyder’s vision for a new Michigan

Help your lawmakers understand why Michigan libraries are vital to the efforts of recreating Michigan with a knowledge-based economy and government efficiencies. Ask your legislators to meet with you and representative from your library to discuss how what you do helps his/her entire district, how libraries are saving money and how they continue to provide essential resources while losing funding each year.

- The Governor has called for rebuilding a knowledge-based economy and libraries are part of the solution. Libraries are partners in programs such as economic gardening with tools for small businesses and literacy programs for everyone from pre-kindergarten to senior citizens. Every one of these programs is at-risk for elimination at the proposed budget levels.
- He also called for governmental efficiencies and group purchasing which is exactly what the Michigan eLibrary is all about – saving the state at least \$72 million a year for the databases alone.
- MeLCat interlibrary loan saves more than \$23 million annually and hit a new record with more than 1 million items loaned statewide in 2010. Citizens will notice if MeLCat falls apart.

- We support and appreciate the Governor's recognition of the Michigan eLibrary with a line item. However, the funding level is insufficient to sustain MeL.

Save MeL and Save Libraries!

Call or email your lawmakers and urge them to save the state funding while saving access to statewide interlibrary loans, MeL and MeL Databases. Tell them a record 1 million interlibrary loans were completed in 2010; without state funding federal funding is lost and the system will collapse.

- \$10 million is the level required to sustain the \$5 million from the federal government that is used to fund the Michigan eLibrary – MeL databases and statewide interlibrary loan.
- At this level of state aid funding, 11 library cooperatives will close in two years.
- These cumulative cuts and diversions will lead to libraries closing or cutting services dramatically including critical services like GED testing.

We Call upon the Legislature to:

- **Hold library funding harmless at last year's level - \$7,250,000.**
- **Restore \$ 3 million in renaissance zone reimbursements for libraries that is required by law.**
- **Do not eliminate the personal property tax without a revenue replacement.**