

Advocacy

The Michigan Library Association leads, educates and advocates for the advancement of the Michigan library community. MLA is the voice of the library community advocating at the state level on behalf of libraries with the Governor and state legislature.

The more MLA members and library advocates the stronger the voice of the library community. We need your help with advocating for funding and legislation that will benefit and improve library services and the librarian profession. So how can you help?

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Thank Your Legislators for Supporting state aid to libraries in the 2019 state budget.

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Invite your legislators and their staffs to your library events (ribbon cuttings, special programs, summer reading).

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Offer a location for legislative office hours at your library.

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Hold candidate forums inviting all potential candidates for a town hall meeting in the library.

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Introduce yourself to newly elected legislators and local officials right after the November elections. Don't wait until January.

2017-18 Accomplishments:

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Six MLA-initiated bills protecting library millages from tax capture and returning more than \$8 million annually to library budgets were signed into law this year. In January, Governor Rick Snyder enacted SB 619-624 now PA 505-510 providing for specially dedicated library millages to be exempt from a number of tax captures. This achievement not only ensures millions of future tax dollars will go to libraries, but it is recognition by the legislature and administration that libraries are unique and important. Our special millages were the only ones given consideration (only the fourth historically) for an exemption in a year that saw a multitude of TIFA bills introduced. This is an incredible recognition by the Michigan legislature of the importance of libraries in this state.

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In 2017 MLA worked to secure an increase of nearly \$1.2 million in state aid to libraries – highest state aid numbers since 2008. The fiscal year 2018 State of Michigan budget went to the governor’s desk with a \$1,191,700.13 boost in funding for libraries in the state aid to libraries line item. In 2018 the increase was an additional \$1 million. This is great news as we advocate to gradually rebuild this funding source.

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MLA worked to educate librarians and ensure they received their Personal Property Tax reimbursement from municipalities. District libraries saw reimbursements above expected amounts due to additional payments collected by the Local Community Stabilization Authority. These were amounts above what was needed for full reimbursement of revenue losses resulting from Personal Property Tax reform. Such payments will continue in future years under current law.

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MLA opposed legislation that would have limited millage proposals to the November ballot only. Work with the bill sponsor ensured only the February millage option was eliminated.

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Work progresses to ensure Penal Fines continue to fund libraries.