

MLA Advocacy - February 22, 2018

The Budget Process Begins



Governor Rick Snyder proposed his 2019 budget. Library funding remains pretty much unchanged from 2018. This is step one in the budget process. Both the House and Senate will make their own recommendations. Any differences between the chambers are decided in conference committee. The proposed budget then heads back to the governor for his signature.

The budget process gives us an opportunity to educate our representatives about how libraries are funded. In the next few weeks MLA and GCSI will begin a series of meetings with legislators. Recall that last year, we saw a \$1.2 million boost in state aid to libraries. We hope to try to increase state aid again this year. Presentations to the House and Senate subcommittees overseeing our budgets will be scheduled soon. We will explain libraries' value to their communities, Michigan residents and their positive economic impact throughout the state.

It's important lawmakers learn about their local libraries from you now. Contact your representatives, invite them to the library for a tour, offer a space for their coffee hour. Explain to them how you help their constituency on a daily basis. There will be many organizations clamoring for their time and attention. The sooner you can educate your representative about your library, the more likely they will support funding and other library specific initiatives. If you need contact information visit [MLA's advocacy page](#).

Library Protection for Narcan Use

Senate Bills 828 and 829 introduced by Sens. Rick Jones (R-Grand Ledge) and Margaret O'Brien (R-Portage) would allow libraries and library employees or agents to purchase, possess, distribute or administer in good faith an opioid antagonist without being subject to criminal prosecution. The law would provide immunity to libraries similar to that provided to public schools.

MLA worked with the Library of Michigan and Michigan Department of Education to help craft this legislation that would give libraries protection in the event of Narcan distribution. The proposed language would hold libraries harmless when administering life-saving Narcan in the

result of a drug overdose at the library. Currently Good Samaritan laws protect individuals from prosecution but as governmental entities libraries could technically be held liable if something went wrong.

In the United States, it is reported that a person dies of an opioid overdose every twenty-four minutes. While they happen everywhere, it's been impossible to miss the stories of overdoses happening in the restrooms and parking lots of public libraries.

In Michigan a number of deaths have been avoided when a trained librarian administered Narcan to an overdosing patron. Public libraries have become a magnet of sorts for people with drug problems, often for the same reasons anyone visits libraries - because they're free and open to the public.

While no one wants to be in a position to have to administer this life saving drug, the fact is our librarians are facing that decision on a regular basis. Providing libraries with protection from civil and criminal liability similar to that afforded to schools would assist in making sure libraries are able to more easily access and administer to opioid overdoses in and around the library.

HB 5618 Ensures State Aid Remains in Michigan

House Bill 5618 of 2018 introduced by Rep. Pamela Hornberger (R-Chesterfield Twp.) is in response to the recent Interstate Compact Bill PA 173 of 2017. The interstate library compact governs agreements for the co-operative or joint conduct of library services for any state bordering on Michigan should libraries chose to engage in those cooperative arrangements. The new legislation ensures that all Michigan library funding remains within the state even under the compact agreements.

ALA Advocacy Bootcamp

MLA and the Michigan Cooperative Directors Association are joining forces to present ALA Advocacy Bootcamp, this April 20, 2018 at the Library of Michigan in Lansing. Advocacy Bootcamp urges attendees to re-think advocacy: to re-define the library community and expand the way we advocate for libraries. The program will cover advocacy basics such as messaging, networking and community engagement as well as highlighting Intellectual Freedom history and principles. Attendees will focus on creating an advocacy plan they can implement in their library. Everyone is welcome to attend. The cost is \$20 and there are no membership requirements of any kind, only that you care about advocating for your library in your community.

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