

Ohio Senate Local Government and Elections Committee  
Chair Theresa Gavarone  
Vice Chair Sandra O'Brien  
Ranking Member Tina Maharath  
Tuesday, May 4, 2021  
House Bill 110 (Oelslager) of the 134th General Assembly

Interested Testimony Provided by:

Jason Kucsma, Executive Director, Toledo Lucas County Public Library

Good Morning Chair Gavarone, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Maharath and members of the Ohio Senate Local Government and Elections Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony on House Bill (HB) 110 on behalf of the Toledo Lucas County Public Library. Toledo Lucas County Library is submitting this written testimony in favor of maintaining the Public Library Fund (PLF) at 1.7 percent of the General Revenue Fund.

My name is Jason Kucsma, Executive Director of the Toledo Lucas County Public Library (TLCPL). Our library system is comprised of 20 locations with headquarters based in Toledo, OH. About half of Toledo Lucas County Public Library's budget is funded by local property taxes, while the other half is from the Public Library Fund—the unique statewide financial commitment to how important Ohio public libraries are to our local communities. HB 110—as passed by the House—has Ohio public libraries negatively impacted by:

- Cutting the PLF percentage from 1.7% to 1.66%.
- Reducing the base of the General Revenue Fund by the 2% via an income tax cut.

Now is not the time to reduce library funding. The community has relied on the Toledo Lucas County Public Library more than ever throughout the pandemic, and we have worked to be a trusted community resource by:

- helping thousands of community members sign-up for vaccines
- distributing thousands of rapid COVID test kits
- circulating more than 3 million items, including more than 1 million eMedia
- delivering books and media to people who are homebound or at assisted living
- serving as a meal distribution site to feed youth in need
- providing 24-hour Wi-Fi access at our locations for people to access school, unemployment, and other online essentials
- partnering with private sector leaders to make face shields with our 3-D printers
- supplying teachers and at-home educators with essential tools, services, and resources to help educate youth in a range of learning environments
- and so much more!

There is more to be done, and rest assured the Library will continue to be a community anchor. While we stand ready to support the local work that will be done through the American Rescue Plan Act funds coming into our community, unfortunately, Ohio's public libraries are not receiving any of these federal funds directly. The federal government has provided some

increased funding to the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and any Toledo and Lucas County funding will likely be very modest and will not close the Library funding gap from the proposed cut by the state legislature.

I urge this committee to support maintaining the Public Library Fund at 1.7 percent of the General Revenue Fund and also ensure that current library funding levels are maintained even if there are overall tax cuts. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours for a strong Toledo and Lucas County,

Jason Kucsma

Executive Director/Fiscal Officer

Toledo Lucas County Public Library