



**Senate Finance Committee
Sub. House Bill 110 Written Testimony
June 3, 2021**

Good morning, Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony today on Substitute House Bill (HB) 110 on behalf of Ohio's public libraries. The Ohio Library Council (OLC) is the statewide association representing Ohio's 251 public library systems (rural, urban and suburban).

We are submitting written testimony today to formally say thank you to the Senate for making public libraries a priority in the substitute bill and for recognizing the strong partnership we have with the state in delivering services at the local level. Increasing the Public Library Fund (PLF) percentage from 1.66% in the House passed budget to 1.70% will help maintain vital library services.

These funds will help libraries to continue to do what they do best, and that is serving their communities. Whether it is connecting job seekers to employment opportunities or addressing educational gaps caused by the pandemic, libraries will continue to innovate and assist with Ohio's recovery efforts. The funds also help to ensure that vital services, such as access to computers and the internet, can continue to be provided to Ohioans statewide through their local libraries.

With more than 8.4 million registered borrowers, Ohio's public libraries are a resource that Ohioans increasingly turn to for a wide variety of services – especially in the areas of early childhood education, broadband connectivity, and workforce development. They are also good stewards of taxpayer dollars and a wise investment. For every \$1 spent by Ohio's public libraries, they return \$5 in economic value to Ohioans.

With almost half of our overall funding coming from the state – none of this would have been possible without the Public Library Fund.

Again, we would like to formally thank the Senate for its commitment to public libraries and to Ohio's citizens who utilize libraries every day. We look forward to working with you, the House and the Governor as the budget bill is finalized.

Sincerely,

Michelle Francis, OLC Executive Director
Jay Smith, Director of Government and Legal Services