

Co-Chair Smith, Co-Chair Steiner-Hayward and members of the Subcommittee, my name is Aletha Bonebrake. I am the current Chair of the State Library Board of Trustees. I live in Baker City and I am the retired director of the Baker County Library District, having served in that capacity for 22 years, and a founding member of the Sage Library Consortium currently combining the catalogs of 77 public, academic, school and special libraries serving 15 counties in Eastern and Central Oregon.

The Board is made up of seven members appointed by the Governor. We are delighted to be back up to our full complement of members as we move forward in a strategic planning process that focuses our resources intentionally on fulfilling the State Library's statutory charges and, in this context, providing support for evolving opportunities in technology and education to meet broad State legislative goals.

We have a diverse and knowledgeable Board representing different user constituencies, library relationships, and geographical areas: Sam Hall from Salem, Ebony Bell from Portland, Susan Hathaway-Marxer from Portland, Jennie Tucker from Summerville in Union County, Ann Malkin from Bend, and Leslie Hicks from Independence.

The State Library Board appreciates the support shown for our programs in the Governor's balanced budget plan. The transformation process that the State Library has been engaged in since 2011 at the legislature's request to shed itself of activities and collections accumulated gradually since its founding 100 years ago, and evaluate its role for the 21st century in relation to its charge and agency partnerships has informed our forward vision and planning, culminating in the Strategic Plan that we are currently implementing. This process was launched with professional guidance, full engagement of the Board in the development of its vision and core values, and is defining the scope and implementation of the State Library programs supported by this budget through excellent managerial leadership and integrated staff support among its three organizational departments.

The Board is in support of the changes in the Ready to Read grant program, renamed Reading for Success to reflect the importance of literacy skills in educational success through high school. The changes therefore expand the age group served from 0 to 14 to 0 to 17 and add the opportunity for after-school or out-of-school programming during the school year in addition to traditional summer reading programs. These two changes serve to align this very successful program with the age and programming guidelines of other state literacy goals and the education investments of the state, all of which have involved a broad stakeholder process. The third change is an increase in the base grant (that is to say, a minimum grant) from \$1,000 to \$1,200, to keep the support relevant to costs of program delivery. These base grants are for the smallest community libraries some of which used to receive \$100-\$200 or less under the formula of geography and child population, the lowest in 2006 being \$51. These were at a level which cannot deliver any meaningful program. In Oregon we make sure the children of our state receive equal opportunities in education with standard funding allocation per child, and additional funding given for small, rural schools, to form an equitable base to support the educational environment for every child. The reasoning is the same for the minimum grants, so that every child has access to enhanced literacy programs to retain skills during the "summer

slide.” Some of these libraries operate with annual book budgets no larger than the program grant and would be unable to find funding for summer reading. However, with the increase in 2007 to a \$1,000 minimum level impacting 50 communities to actually make these Summer Reading programs meaningful, library participation rose to 98.4%, and in 2013-2014 to 100%. Last year’s grant reporting reveals that every \$1 in grant funding leveraged an average of \$1.87 in community support, a nearly 2 to 1 local match when the funds are granted and used.

The Board supports the full funding request for the Talking Books and Braille Service which includes the return of general fund support for the State Library Specialist 1 for the following reasons:

- 1) the donation fund exists and is heavily supported by the grateful user community to provide the kind of enhancements that enrich their lives, such as the audio news-line of local print media created daily, the cost of which is shared by the National Federation for the Blind – Oregon, the State Library and the Oregon Commission for the Blind, as well as the League of Women’s Voters’ guide, the recording of Oregon books at the Idaho State Library, production of the specialized calendar for the vision impaired, and all the fund development activity;
- 2) the fund cannot sustain support of this position, which is essential to shipping and receiving of all digital material and cleaning and circulating of all machines, a position fundamental to the actual provision of this service;
- 3) if the fund is used up there would be no funds for the appeals and fund development, which is tantamount to eating one’s seed corn;
- 4) nor would there be funds for the essential circulation services performed by this position.

In the end, when we are serving only 8% of the eligible Oregon population, we have the duty to sustain the base program and build enhancements to meet new opportunities and serve new customers. The donation funds were used to save the program during the Great Recession. It is not a sustainable model.

Lastly and briefly, the Board is supportive of the recent changes in the structure of Government Information and Library Services, in terms of streamlining service delivery through outreach to its customer base and training in use of tools, a proactive rather than a reactive approach. The department is reorganizing its staffing and services to the more efficient and effective “just in time” instead of a “just in case” model. The Board is particularly pleased with the progress made in realigning this service.

The Board supports the State Librarian in the organizational development of the cooperative environment at the State Library, working closely with labor in creating a mutually supportive single agency value system.

Thank you for your kind attention. I would be pleased to answer any questions.