This year, Pennsylvania will invest heavily in education. This investment should include our libraries.

We provide critical public access to early learning and lifelong literacy, to job-hunting and resource-sharing.

We’ve made do with less, but now need and deserve more. Not big increases, but reliable, sustainable funding.

Let’s take the first steps this year to strengthen our libraries, and
INVESTING IN EDUCATION, BY DEFINITION, MEANS INVESTING IN LIBRARIES.

Pennsylvania’s 600-plus libraries are a core component of our state’s educational opportunities. Building a more educated Pennsylvania means keeping libraries open and available.

While libraries represent a tiny (about 1/2 of one percent) portion of the state’s education budget, we’re a key part of the information-sharing, access and educational experiences that support pre-K as well as our K-12 and college students. For every $10 invested in public libraries, $55 is returned to Pennsylvania taxpayers.

A 2012 snapshot of library services in PA showed that during that year, 3.85 million Pennsylvanians, including 2.8 million children, took part in more than 186,000 library programs – programs that help our youngest citizens develop learning, decision-making, and social skills that prepare them to lead successful lives. Since the state currently has 2.9 million children, it’s clear we’re impacting children’s lives in a big way.

During 2012, 2.8 million Pennsylvania children took part in more than 186,000 library programs.

A 2011 national Harris poll concluded the following: Taxpayers trust libraries to use public dollars well. Job-seekers and entrepreneurs turn to libraries for help getting started and re-started. People of all ages and walks of life visit libraries. Ninety-one percent of those polled place great value in the library’s provision of information for school and work.

WE ARE COMMUNITY ACCESS TO EARLY AND LIFELONG LEARNING AND LITERACY.

The Pennsylvania Library Association’s literacy initiative, PA Forward (www.paforward.org), brings to life how our citizens rely on libraries for self-improvement in five essential literacy areas:

- **Basic**: Libraries build literacy and learning skills from the earliest years of life, sustaining year-round learning from preschool to adults, making lifelong learning possible for anyone.

- **Information**: Libraries help us gain a command of new online resources and technologies and give us the ability to fully participate as citizens, workers and consumers in a digital society.

Libraries are community centers of information, technology and learning that greatly expand educational and economic opportunity.

- **Civic & Social**: Libraries support our ability to engage in and contribute to community life.

- **Health**: Libraries guide us to lead healthier lives and make more informed health care decisions.

- **Financial**: Libraries prepare us to make smarter financial decisions at home and at work, and teach our youngest citizens to understand financial concepts and begin to think about spending, saving and contributing.

Libraries are community centers of information, technology and learning. With the right support, libraries can greatly expand literacy and economic opportunities for all of our citizens.
WE’re Pennsylvania’s Public Access to Online Job-Hunting and Resource-Sharing.

Jobs drive our state’s economy and PA libraries help connect jobseekers with gainful employment. Through locations in all 67 counties, libraries provide free computer use, access to job databases, assistance with online applications and pointers on building a resume.

During 2012, Pennsylvania’s libraries provided 11.4 million wireless Internet connection sessions and 8.4 million Internet computer sessions through 7,844 public computers – at no charge to users.

Our libraries provide these and other services with the help of state allocations toward POWER Library (statewide subscriptions to electronic resources for school and public libraries), Ask Here PA (online 24/7 reference assistance) and the Interlibrary Delivery Service. But with technology allocations for libraries currently slashed by half, they can’t provide access to the level our communities need. About 3 million Pennsylvanians still do not have Internet access in their homes. However, our current proportion of public access computers ranks Pennsylvania 48th in the nation.

During 2012, Pennsylvania’s libraries provided a total of almost 30 million wireless Internet connections and Internet computer sessions through 7,844 public computers. Yet our proportion of public computers ranks us 48th in the nation.

1 Vermont
2 Indiana
3 Nebraska
4 Maine
5 Wyoming
6 Kansas
7 Iowa
8 New Hampshire
9 District of Columbia
10 Rhode Island
11 South Dakota
12 Connecticut
13 Idaho
14 Montana
15 Michigan
16 Alabama
17 Minnesota
18 Illinois
19 Ohio
20 Colorado
21 Louisiana
22 Wisconsin
23 North Dakota
24 Kentucky
25 Arkansas
26 New York
27 Massachusetts
28 Oklahoma
29 New Jersey
30 New Mexico
31 Missouri
32 Washington
33 Mississippi
34 South Carolina
35 Alaska
36 Florida
37 Virginia
38 Maryland
39 Texas
40 Oregon
41 Arizona
42 West Virginia
43 North Carolina
44 Tennessee
45 Georgia
46 Delaware
47 Utah
48 Pennsylvania
49 California
50 Nevada
51 Hawaii
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>STATE SUPPORT FOR LIBRARY SERVICES</strong></th>
<th>THEN</th>
<th>NOW</th>
<th>WOLF PLAN</th>
<th>PaLA NEXT-YEAR GOALS</th>
<th>PaLA LONG-TERM GOALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOVERNOR</strong></td>
<td>RENDELL</td>
<td>CORBETT</td>
<td>WOLF</td>
<td>WOLF</td>
<td>WOLF</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PUBLIC LIBRARY SUBSIDY</strong></td>
<td>$75,750,000</td>
<td>$53,507,000</td>
<td>$53,507,000</td>
<td>$62,693,625</td>
<td>$90,253,500</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LIBRARY SERVICES FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED &amp; DISABLED</strong></td>
<td>$2,965,000</td>
<td>$2,567,000</td>
<td>$2,567,000</td>
<td>$2,667,000</td>
<td>$2,965,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LIBRARY ACCESS</strong></td>
<td>$7,386,000</td>
<td>$3,071,000</td>
<td>$2,821,000</td>
<td>$4,149,750</td>
<td>$7,386,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ELECTRONIC LIBRARY CATALOG</strong></td>
<td>$3,842,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>(PARTIALLY INCLUDED IN ACCESS RESTORATION)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>OFFICE OF COMMONWEALTH LIBRARIES</strong></td>
<td>$4,784,000</td>
<td>$1,957,000</td>
<td>$1,965,000</td>
<td>$2,663,750</td>
<td>$4,784,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ALL LIBRARY SERVICES APPROPRIATIONS TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>$94,727,000</td>
<td>$61,102,000</td>
<td>$60,860,000</td>
<td>$72,174,125</td>
<td>$105,388,500</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
WE'RE NOT SEEKING BIG INCREASES. WE'RE TALKING ABOUT RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE FUNDING.

In the 2015-16 budget that likely will include sizeable increases in state funding for education, the Pennsylvania Library Association urges that this first step be taken: a gradual and proportionate replenishment of library resources.

Our financial goals call for eventual state increases in program support totaling $44 million, or about $11 million in additional support per year for the next four years. The longer-term goals include:

- More equitable state support for library services. We’d like to propose as a general principle a $5 local-$5 state matching plan for the Public Library Subsidy to ensure a reliable and fair stream of funding.

  **State Investment**
  - Currently: $53,507,000
  - Recommended: $90,253,500

- Restoration to pre-Great Recession (2007-08) funding levels for Library Access (including POWER Library and Statewide Library Card reimbursements), the State Library and Libraries for the Visually Impaired and Disabled.

  **State Investment**
  - Currently: $7,595,000
  - Recommended: $15,135,000

WE MADE DO WITH LESS IN HARD TIMES, BUT WE NOW NEED AND DESERVE MORE.

Since 2007-08, state budget cuts to library funding have totaled $196 million. Library funding is now at $61 million – a third less than what it was for 2007-08.

Pennsylvania now ranks 40th in library funding – far behind every neighboring state except West Virginia.

After nine years of stagnant and declining budgets, books and electronic resources, library hours, trained professional staff and training opportunities have all been reduced. Funding for POWER Library, which powers our libraries’ technology resources shared through public and school libraries statewide, has been drastically cut to 38 percent of what it was for 2007-08.

PA now ranks 40th in library funding – far behind every neighboring state except West Virginia. Do we really think that’s good enough? The sad truth is, our Commonwealth’s state-run liquor stores are keeping better hours than our libraries.

OUR ASK TO THE GOVERNOR, LEGISLATIVE LEADERS, AND RANK AND FILE LEGISLATORS:

Take the first steps this year to strengthen libraries by boosting library funding. Increase library aid each year in proportion to the increase in general education funding.

THANK YOU.