

DRAFT RESOLUTION FROM WESTERN COUNCIL TO COSLA AND ALA REGARDING INCREASE OF GRANTS TO
STATES PROGRAM TO \$1 PER CAPITA (\$325.14 MILLION)
MAY 23, 2018

WHEREAS, for more than 50 years, the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States program and its predecessor programs have supported the delivery of library services in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, \$235 million is currently appropriated to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) for LSTA, of which \$164 million is provided using a population-based formula to State Library Administrative Agencies (SLAAs), the official agencies charged by law with the extension and development of library services through the Grants to States program; and

WHEREAS, libraries and State Library agencies play a critical role in democracy and community development by promoting civil discourse; empowering citizens to learn, imagine, succeed; developing new and innovative ways of meeting the needs of, and uniting increasingly diverse populations; and

WHEREAS, libraries and state library agencies provide services and support to veterans; free broadband and computer access to residents lacking online capability; improve workforce and career acquisition, maintain successful early literacy efforts in communities; support sustainability in our nation's rural communities, and library staff, resources, programs, and family engagement are a major resource for education, schools, and learners of all ages; and

WHEREAS, each year state library agencies create over 1,500 Grants to States projects to support the purposes and priorities outlined in the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) by distributing the funds through competitive subawards to--or cooperative agreements with--public, academic, research, school, or special libraries or consortia to meet the needs of children, parents, teenagers, adult learners, senior citizens, veterans, the unemployed, the business community, services for the blind and physically handicapped and the library workforce; and

WHEREAS, funding for the vital Grants to States program from IMLS has remained essentially flat for more than 20 years despite steeply rising costs to libraries and state library agencies to maintain staff, services, resources, programs, services, and other costs associated with maintaining a robust library infrastructure which in 2016 resulted in 1.3 billion library visits, with more than 2.2 billion items being borrowed ; and

WHEREAS, funding for the State Grants to Libraries through IMLS is the main federal funding source for ongoing library services and programs in all states and territories, yet accounts for less than 49 cents per resident out of a national budget of \$4.147 trillion;

BE IT RESOLVED by the Western Council of State Librarians that the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) and the American Library Association (ALA) shall work in cooperation with national and state partner organizations to

- 1) urge Congress to commit a minimum of \$1 per capita specifically for IMLS' Grants to States Grants program at the Institute of Museum and Library Services; and*
- 2) work with Congressional leaders to secure all adjustments necessary to appropriations currently authorized in Public Law 111–340, Title II—Library Services and Technology, and any related or subsequent legislation for the Grants to States program that will enable the increase from the current \$0.49 to \$1.00 per capita, or \$325.14 million; and*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these agencies work cooperatively and with IMLS to develop appropriate messages for stakeholders on where funds will be used locally and nationally that will result in successfully increasing this amount to improve library services and access to information by all.

Approved unanimously by Western Council of State Librarians members attending the spring meeting, May 23, 2018.

Greg Lucas (CA) version:

*DRAFT RESOLUTION FROM WESTERN COUNCIL TO COSLA AND ALA REGARDING INCREASE OF GRANTS TO STATES PROGRAM TO \$1 PER CAPITA (\$325.14 MILLION)
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Not only are libraries essential to democracy and community development, they deliver four times the benefit for every dollar invested in them.

Libraries are essential parts of our nation's education system. They spur economic growth and innovation in numerous ways including tech training, job search opportunities and access to databases and online content.

Libraries unite increasingly diverse populations. They support veterans. Feed the hungry. Offer free computer access. And build stronger readers of all ages.

For more than 50 years, the Library Services and Technology Act and its predecessor programs have helped ensure libraries throughout the United States can deliver what their communities demand.

These grant funds help meet the needs of children, parents, teenagers, adult learners, senior citizens, the unemployed and the business community as well as providing services for the blind and physically handicapped.

Federal funding for libraries has remained essentially flat for more than 20 years despite the steeply rising costs of maintaining a robust library infrastructure that in 2016 saw 1.3 billion library visits, with more than 2.2 billion items being borrowed.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services currently earmarks \$235 million for libraries of which \$164 million is provided using a population-based formula to each state. Of the \$4.1 trillion federal budget, \$164 million represents less than .00004 percent.

That's not the level of investment the largest economy in the world needs to make in its future.

*To that end, the Western Council of State Librarians, representing every state west of the Mississippi, calls on Congress and the president to provide a **minimum** of \$1 for every American to the Institute of Museum and Library Services to strengthen the nation's economy by investing in our libraries.*

Approved unanimously by Western Council of State Librarians members attending the spring meeting, May 23, 2018.