

Senator Guy Guzzone  
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee  
3 West-Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

28 January 2021

**RE: Senate Bill 477 Enoch Pratt Free Library – Operating Hours and Funding  
Position: Support**

Dear Chairman Guzzone and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee,  
I am the Chair of the Enoch Pratt Free Library Board of Trustees and Directors, and I am writing you in support of **Senate Bill 477- Enoch Pratt Library-Operating Hours and Funding.**

As Board Chair, I can attest to the fact that the Pratt is a good steward of the State's funding resources given our dual role as the City of Baltimore's Library system and the designated State Library Resource Center. As you may be aware, this legislation dates back to January of 2016 when the Pratt Library made the courageous decision to remain open to the public after normal hours in the wake of the Freddie Gray unrest. That moment sparked a renewed recognition for the important role that the Pratt Library System plays as a vital resource for the community. Since that time, funding from this legislation has enabled Enoch Pratt Library branches to expand their hours to include evenings and weekends.

**Since library hours were expanded the Pratt has seen:**

- 25% increase in collection use
- 43% increase in Wi-Fi usage
- 10% increase in reference materials which supports educational studies
- 65% increase in social media followers

We urge you and your committee to support SB 477 which will provide funding to allow the Pratt to continue expanding its operating hours at a time when residents need the resources the most to thrive during recovery phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Enoch Pratt Library and public libraries throughout Maryland.

Sincerely,



Mychelle Farmer, MD

Chair, Pratt Library Board of Trustees, Directors

cc: Heidi Daniel – CEO, Enoch Pratt Free Library  
Gordon Krabbe-COO, Enoch Pratt Free Library