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**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**  
**SB 501- Libraries - Aging Infrastructure Capital Improvement Grant Program - Established**  
**March 1, 2023**  
**Support**

Dear Chairman Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe, and Distinguished Members of the Committee:

I am writing in favor of SB 501- Libraries - Aging Infrastructure Capital Improvement Grant Program - Established. The Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA) has established procedures to receive requests and distribute State capital funding through the annual County Library Capital Grant Program. This bill and its additional funding are critical to library building and renovation projects across the state.

More than half of the 191 public library buildings in Maryland are over twenty-five (25) years old. Consequences of this aging infrastructure are: 5 buildings need a new roof, 3 facilities require alterations for ADA compliance, 4 libraries have HVAC systems that are at the end of their useful life, 26 buildings require technological upgrades in order to provide 21st century library services, 23 existing facilities require general renovation, and 6 buildings have been identified for replacement with a new structure. The total estimated cost of these projects is \$424.38 million. The Centreville Branch of the Queen Anne's County Library is one of those buildings that is over 25 years old.

Queen Anne's County Library has been awarded a total of \$3,825,000 in construction funds through the Maryland Library Capital Grant Program between FY 2018 – FY 2022. The awarding of this funding brought the dream of an expanded Kent Island Branch to fruition, taking the branch from an undersized 10,000 square feet to over 20,000 square feet, to better serve this growing community. After years of planning, feasibility studies, and talks with our community and our elected officials, Phase 1 of our expansion project was completed in March, 2022 with Phase 2 being completed in May of 2023. This grant funding provided our community access to electric car charging stations; multiple small group study rooms for our students and tutors as well as small business owners to use; a maker-space to foster innovation; multiple large meeting rooms to facilitate community gatherings; expanded collections to support our community's love of learning; and so much more. This grant funding was instrumental to making our dreams a reality. This funding also came with a 50% match from our county, which meant our commissioners had to make hard decisions about other, equally important county capital projects.

Support for this bill will provide other public library projects the funding they need to positively impact their communities and continue to foster the love of learning. In Queen Anne's County, the need for a branch in the north part of our county has been identified as the number one priority in our Facilities Master Plan. In addition, our second priority is upgrading and expanding our Centreville Branch which is over 50 years old. This bill will make funding available to help our county make these projects a reality. With so many competing priorities for county funding, the 20% match is critical to helping not only Queen Anne's County, but other rural counties, make library building projects a priority.

In conclusion, I wish to thank members of the General Assembly for supporting public libraries. Supporting this bill will build Maryland's commitment to its residents so we can strengthen and sustain our library infrastructure for generations to come.

I respectfully request that you fully support the SB 501- Libraries - Aging Infrastructure Capital Improvement Grant Program - Established.

Sincerely,

Janet Salazar  
Director