



WASHINGTON COUNTY
FREE LIBRARY

Where People & Possibilities Meet

Ways and Means Committee
HB1115 – Libraries - Regional Resource Centers – Governance Requirements
March 8, 2023

Dear Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins and Committee members:

I am writing in **Support of HB1115 Regional Resource Centers – Governance Requirements.**

This bill aims to update the Regional Resource Centers (RRC) statute that was passed into law in 1957 as part of Maryland Code, § 23-202. While the law has worked well for the Western Maryland Regional Library, the RRC's in Southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore have different needs that have evolved in their respective communities.

Over the last eighteen months Maryland's three Regional Libraries, the fourteen county libraries they serve, and the Maryland State Library Agency have been working to strengthen the code that covers Regional Library Governance.

This bill, if codified into law, ensures that the Western Maryland Regional Library will continue to function the way that provides the most support to the citizens of Western Maryland – by allowing it to continue to be under the auspices of the Washington County Free Library Board of Trustees. Under this arrangement, the administrative costs are lower for the Western Maryland Regional Library, which in turn allows more state funding to support materials and programs that are important to members of our communities. This is especially important for Garrett and Allegany Counties, as they have been losing population, and therefore some of their state funding, since 2017.

All three Boards of Trustees in Garrett, Allegany and Washington Counties, and Library Directors for those three systems are in agreement that this is the best form of governance for the Western Maryland Regional Library.

Thank you for your support for HB1115, and your continued support of Maryland's libraries.

Jenny L. Bakos
Executive Director
Washington County Free Library