

**Minnesota Library Funding
Minimum Level of Support/Maintenance of Effort
Recommendations**

The Minnesota Library Funding Committee, a combination of county commissioners, library trustees, library directors and state staff, was formed in January of 2008 to examine the current Minnesota State Statutes as they reference library maintenance of effort and the Minnesota State Library Services Terms and Guidelines regarding maintenance of effort. The MLF Committee's charge was to review the statutes and guidelines in view of the issues and concerns that have been raised by city and county officials and library boards and librarians over the past several years.

While retaining some constant level of ongoing funding for public libraries, the committee's recommendations benefit county and city governments in the following ways:

- Minimum level of support, which is currently based on the second preceding year's Adjusted Net Tax Capacity (ANTC), will be based on the average of the second, third and fourth preceding years, thus smoothing out the effects of sudden swings in ANTC.
- Maintenance of Effort, which is currently allowed to decrease by the same percentage as a decrease in ANTC, will also be allowed to decrease by the same percentage as a city or county's decrease in levy aid base. This means that a decrease to ANTC and/or a decrease to Local government Aid or County Program Aid would be factored in.
- The definition of capital expenses has been greatly expanded so that fewer categories of library expenditures are subject to maintenance of effort.
- The timeline for library pilot projects has been lengthened from one year to three years so that uncompleted projects carrying over into the next fiscal year are not affected by maintenance of effort.
- Cities and counties may allocate additional funds earmarked for future capital expense projects without having those funds included in the maintenance of effort calculation.
- Regional Public Library Systems are making a concerted effort to increase state funding to public library systems and also to local government aid and county program aid in order to ensure that the State carries its fair proportion of the cost of library service.