

Council of Regional Public Library System Administrators RLBSS Funding Request 2017

**HF 1382: Nornes, Murphy, M., Loon, Erickson, Ecklund
SF 1033: Dahms, Frentz, Pratt, Wiger**

The Minnesota Library Association (MLA) and Council of Regional Public Library System Administrators (CRPLSA) propose a funding request to the MN State Legislature to increase the annual appropriation for Regional Library Basic System Support (RLBSS). All twelve of the Regional Public Library System Governing Boards have unanimously approved this effort.

Legislative Proposal

MLA and CPRLSA request that the 2017 Legislature provide a \$3 million per year increase to RLBSS funds coupled with a change to the current distribution formula for RLBSS funds. The proposed formula change increases the Basic System Services factor from 5% to 15% and reduces the Equalization factor from 25% to 15%. The net effect of this request is intended to:

- increase total RLBSS funding to reflect increased costs and changing use patterns of public library services, and
- lessen the volatility of the equalization factor in the formula as property tax valuations shift throughout the state.

In addition, the proposal requests that the distribution formula be based on the population and tax capacity figures as reported by the Minnesota State Department of Revenue and the Minnesota State Demographic Center respectively on January 1st of the year in which the grants are awarded. The present statutory language, which bases RLBSS calculations upon fiscal current year numbers, requires systems to begin establishing their budgets for the next calendar year before official figures needed to calculate RLBSS shares are available.

Additional Notes:

- Total State RLBSS has increased only once in over 20 years – and no new dollars have been introduced into the RLBSS formula since FY 2009.
- An increase of \$3 million per year would represent an annual rate of growth of less than 2.5% from FY 2010 through FY 2018.
- Regional public library systems serve as a cornerstone for public library services throughout the state and provide the foundation for Minnesota residents to access cooperative statewide services including Minitex/MnLINK interlibrary loan, ELM databases, reciprocal borrowing privileges, staff training, and more.
- Minnesota's public libraries provide vital services that address community needs.
- An increase in funding, plus a formula change, will provide a stable funding source for all regional public library systems across the state.