

Lompoc City Council Agenda Item

City Council Meeting Date: February 1, 2011

TO: Laurel M. Barcelona, City Administrator

FROM: Molly Gerald, Library Director
M_Gerald@ci.lompoc.ca.us

SUBJECT: Opposition to Defunding of the Public Library Fund, Library Literacy Services, and The California Library Services Act



RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign the attached letter to the State Senate and Assembly Sub-Committees on Education and Finance, stating the City's opposition to the defunding of the Public Library Fund, Library Literacy Services, and the California Library Services Act.

BACKGROUND

The California Education Code states that there should be "permanent, stable, and predictable financing for public libraries of the state through a combination of state and local revenues." The Code further reveals, "...the public library is a supplement to the formal system of free public education, and a source of information and inspiration to persons of all ages, cultural backgrounds, and economic statuses, and a resource for continuing education and reeducation beyond the years of formal education, and as such deserves adequate financial support from government at all levels."

Governor Brown has proposed the elimination of all funding in the 2011-12 budget for public libraries. This includes funding for the Public Library Fund, Library Literacy Services, and the California Library Services Act. These three line items total \$30.4 million in the current year budget, and they support statewide efforts, regional coordination, and local programs.

DISCUSSION

The Public Library Fund (PLF) is a direct allocation to public libraries on a per capita basis. In 2010-2011, the Lompoc Public Library System received \$22,325. If the Public Library Fund were allocated at 100%, as is was originally conceived, this allocation would be \$206,358 for the Lompoc Valley. PLF funding has been reduced by over 75% since 2000.

The Literacy Program has operated for 21 years as an adjunct program of the Lompoc Public Library. In 2010-2011, the State Library allocation to the program was \$28,418. Without this funding, the Literacy Program will have no sustainable source of revenue in 2011-12.

The California Library Services Act (CLSA) allows local library jurisdictions to cooperate in a meaningful way throughout California. The Lompoc Public Library System is one of six jurisdictions forming the Black Gold Cooperative Library System. The State allocation to the Black Gold System in 2010-11 is \$113,000. This funding allows the cooperative to offer shared delivery and reference resources online. Each library is reimbursed for sharing its holdings with other libraries through a funding mechanism called Transaction Based Reimbursement (TBR), which offsets the contributions individual library jurisdictions make to fund Black Gold operations. The TBR offset for the Lompoc Library in 2010-11 is estimated at \$31,396. Like the PLF, the Transaction Base Reimbursement funding has been reduced over 75% since 2000. Without the Transaction Based Reimbursement, the Lompoc Library System's contribution to Black Gold will increase in 2011-12.

California Libraries receive a significant amount of Federal funding as a match to State funding. It is estimated that California's public libraries will lose approximately \$16 million in Federal funds if State funding is eliminated.

SUMMARY

The proposed defunding of public libraries targets one of the hardest hit segments of local government. Although California's budget situation is dire, public libraries have done more than their share to assist with the budget deficit by absorbing more than 75% in funding decreases. The State of California should honor its responsibility to join counties and cities in the funding of library programs that benefit all Californians. By authorizing the Mayor to sign the attached, letter, the City will convey its opposition to the defunding of the Public Library Fund, Library Literary Services, and the California Library Services Act.

Molly Gerald, Library Director

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL:

Laurel Barcelona, City Administrator