

State Budget
Recommendations
in Progress!
Texas Library



Texline 301, February 23, 2015

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Overview: Funding Decisions Are Now Being Made!

State Budgeting

The House and Senate budget committees are nearing the end of the first phase of budget deliberations. With both the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees have now heard public testimony of most state agency budgets, lawmakers serving on these budget committees must now make recommendations on funding requests.

While both the Senate version (SB 2) and House version (HB 1) of the Appropriations Bill funded the State Library's base budget request (that is the current funding level), neither chamber approved funding for the agency's additional requests (i.e., additional money for existing or new programs), including the two key library initiatives: 1) increased funding for TexShare/TexQuest and 2) funds for workforce development training in libraries.

We ask all library supporters to continue contacting their state legislators to ask them to help in securing funding for these TSLAC requests.

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We ask all library supporters to continue contacting their state legislators to ask them for help in securing funding for these TSLAC requests.

Budget Recommendations Imminent: Deliver the Message!

Securing appropriations for these requests is our mission! The Texas State Library and Archives Commission is reviewed initially by the Article I subgroups of each of the budget committees.

Contacting legislators is especially critical if your representative or senator serves on either of the budget committees (see the lists at the left). If your legislators do not serve on these committees, we still need you to contact them and ask them to work with colleagues on these committees to support libraries.

The Message: [Support the full budget and exceptional items requests of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission \(Article I\)](#), especially the following two library initiatives that benefit communities all across the state!

[Shared Digital Content](#): \$6.4 million to build digital educational collections. Through TexShare (for public and college library users) & TexQuest (for K-12 public schools), libraries support education and economic development through shared digital content.

This program leverages the purchasing power of the state and reaps enormous savings. A conservative Return on Investment (ROI) for this service shows that, for every \$1 spent, taxpayers gain \$8 of valuable resources.

[Funds for Libraries in Support of Workforce and Economic Development](#): \$550,000 to train and help equip libraries of all types to support the Texas workforce. Libraries provide a central path for meeting the state's priorities of establishing educational opportunities, creating a favorable environment for business, and increasing literacy.

Throughout the state, libraries and local Workforce Solutions offices are partnering to meet the demands for worker training programs. However, these efforts are only a fraction of the activity that could be undertaken. With additional training, the State Library can position many of the state's libraries to increase their programming and leverage resources and opportunities.

RESOURCES

- A one-page handout on [TLA's Budget Priorities](#)
- A one-page handout on the funding request for [Shared Digital Content](#) (TexShare and TexQuest)
- A one-page on the funding request for [Workforce Development Training for Libraries](#)
- Click on [TLA's Advocate!](#) site for links to legislator look-up tools and other resources.
- See TLA's advocacy page for additional information on contacting legislators:
<http://www.txla.org/advocacy-how-to>

Contacting State Legislators

WHO REPRESENTS ME? Click on the button below. You can find your state senator, representative, and State Board of Education member.



For the most accurate data, include your full 9-digit zip code.

Texas House

Texas House Members

The mailing address for all reps: Representative John Doe
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768-2910

Representatives Serving on the House Appropriations

[Representative Trent Ashby](#); phone: 512-463-0508
[Representative Cecil Bell](#); phone: 512-463-0650
[Representative Greg Bonnen](#); phone: 512-463-0729
[Representative Cindy Burkett](#); phone: 512-463-0464
[Representative Giovanni Capriglione](#); phone: 512-463-0690
[Representative Sarah Davis](#); phone: 512-463-0389
[Representative Dawnna Dukes](#); phone: 512-463-0506
[Representative Helen Giddings](#); phone: 512-463-0953
[Representative Larry Gonzales](#); phone: 512-463-0670
[Representative Donna Howard](#); phone: 512-463-0631
[Representative Bryan Hughes](#); phone: 512-463-0271
[Representative Linda Koop](#); phone: 512-463-0454
[Representative Oscar Longoria](#); phone: 512-463-0645
[Representative Marisa Marquez](#); phone: 512-463-0638

[Representative Ruth Jones McClendon](#); phone: 512-463-0708
[Representative Borris Miles](#); phone: 512-463-0518
[Representative Rick Miller](#); phone: 512-463-0710
[Representative Sergio Munoz](#); phone: 512-463-0704
[Representative John Otto](#); phone: 512-463-0570 (Chair)
[Representative Dade Phelan](#); phone: 512-463-0706
[Representative Four Price](#); phone: 512-463-0470
[Representative John Raney](#); phone: 512-463-0698
[Representative Justin Rodriguez](#); phone: 512-463-0669
[Representative J.D. Sheffield](#); phone: 512-463-0628
[Representative Sylvester Turner](#); phone: 512-463-0554 (Vice-Chair)
[Representative Gary VanDeaver](#); phone: 512-463-0576
[Representative Armando Walle](#); phone: 512-463-0490

Everyone should contact: [Speaker Joe Straus](#)

Texas Senate

Texas Senate

The mailing address for all senators is:

Senator First Name Last Name

Capitol Station

P.O. Box 12068

Austin, TX 78711

Senators Serving on the Finance Committee

District 1: [Senator Kevin Eltife](#); 512-463-0101

District 3: [Senator Robert Nichols](#); 512-463-0103

District 5: [Senator Charles Schwertner](#); 512-463-0105

District 7: [Senator Paul Bettencourt](#); 512-463-0107

District 9: [Senator Kelly Hancock](#); 512-463-0109

District 11: [Senator Larry Taylor](#); 512-463-0111

District 12: [Senator Jane Nelson](#); 512-463-0112

District 14: [Senator Kirk Watson](#); 512-463-0114

District 15: [Senator John Whitmire](#); 512-463-0115

District 17: [Senator Joan Huffman](#); 512-463-0117

District 18: [Senator Lois Kolkhorst](#); 512-463-0118

District 19: [Senator Carlos Uresti](#); 512-463-0119

District 20: [Senator Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa](#); 512-463-0120

District 23: [Senator Royce West](#); 512-463-0123

District 31: [Senator Kel Seliger](#); 512-463-0131

All should contact: Lt. Governor Dan Patrick: (512) 463-0001

More on Contacting Elected Officials

1) If you are calling the office:

- Ask to speak to the staff person working on Appropriations or Finance (Senate).
- When you get that person, introduce yourself, tell them you are a constituent, and tell them you are calling to ask for the legislator's support of library funding.
- Tell them you are contacting them to discuss the Texas State Library and Archives Commission's budget, which is in Article 1. You want them to support two key library requests: 1) Shared Digital Content (TexShare and TexQuest) and 2) funding for library workforce training.
- You can use the talking points provided here as you cover these issues briefly with the staffer.
- Ask if s/he has any questions and thank them. It's that easy!

2) To learn more about contacting legislative offices: [read the TLA Advocacy Primer](#).

School Librarian Certification

The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) will meet on March 6, 2015 in Austin. One of the items up for discussion is the certification of school librarians. SBEC members will review the various components of the certification requirements, including the critical element of two years of teaching experience.

TLA's Texas Association of School Librarians (TASL) has been hard at work drafting information for SBEC members. Additionally, TLA worked with SBEC in providing information and support as SBEC gathered school library representatives to discuss the criteria and make recommendations. A taskforce met last November and offered key points for consideration. The TASL and TLA position was conveyed to SBEC in a letter submitted by TASL leaders.

See: [School Librarians are Teachers](#).

Agenda information for the March 6 meeting will be available at the [SBEC website](#) along with information on contacting members of the Board.

Hearing Recaps

Budget Hearings

Members of the Senate Finance Committee heard testimony on Feb. 4 on the State Library's budget, and the House Appropriations Article I Subcommittee heard testimony on Feb. 16. A total of 20 people have testified in support of the agency's budget request. Library supporters spoke passionately about library programs – shared digital content (i.e., TexShare and TexQuest) and workforce development training funds – and the agency's overall budget at these hearing.

We thank the following individuals who testified and traveled to Austin (some twice!) in support of the State Library and Archives Commission's budget.

Chris Custer, Sharon Gullett, Traci Jensen, Jim Johnson, Donna Kearley, Jennifer LaBoon, Leah Mann, Darrell Newsom, Danielle Plumer, Jeanne Standley, Robin Stout, Kyle Whipple, Jim Allison, Anne Keene, Ty Burns, Becky Calzada, Mayor Hal Richards, Jennifer Schwartz, Rebecca Sullivan, Tina Urdiales, and Cynthia Velis.

We also appreciate everyone who participated in Library Virtual Action Day! We know libraries across the state took the opportunity to contact legislative offices. Members of the Friends of Libraries and Archives of Texas took the day to visit with their state lawmakers here in Austin. We thank Lori Brix, Gene Mackenzie, Julie Ousley, Carol Roark, Rhoda Goldberg, and Kerry McGeath who traveled down for the day.

School Library Standards

The State Board of Education's Committee on Instruction met on February 12, 2015 to discuss revising current school library standards. State Librarian and Director of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission Mark Smith presented information to the SBOE on the current school library standards and the need to begin a process to update them.

The members of the SBOE were very positive about the importance of school library programs and agreed that revising the standards was an important process to begin. As state statute stipulates, updating these standards is a joint endeavor undertaken by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and the Texas Education Agency.

We expect additional information about this process to be developed by the agencies in the coming weeks. To view the background material on the current standards, you may review the SBOE's documentation for the Feb. 12 meeting. See: [Discussion of School Library Standards](#).

Telecom Bill Filed

Rep. Jimmie Don Aycock (R-Killeen) has filed HB 1475. We appreciate Rep. Aycock's support of educational institutions. This bill would extend the special state pricing for telecommunications services first established in 1995 by HB 2128, the state telecommunications deregulation bill (the Public Utility Regulatory Act of 1995).

Provisions of HB 2128 were designed to open competition for local service in order to keep rates down and generate new services, such as high-speed Internet access. The legislature took special care to ensure that a telecommunications infrastructure that connects public entities such as schools, libraries, institutions of higher education, non-profit telemedicine centers, and public hospitals was established at a reasonable rate.

To that end, several discounts were established under Chapters 57, 58, and 59 of the Texas Utilities Code for the benefit of these entities. In particular, a discount on contracts for private network services (i.e. customer specific contracts that include T1, T2, and T3 lines/trunks) was set to expire in 2005, but SB 5 (Second Called Session of the 79th Regular Session) extended these discounts through January 2012.

These discounts allow libraries, schools, colleges and hospitals to purchase high speed services from incumbent local exchange carriers at 105% to 110% of long run incremental costs (LRIC). In

2005, the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) approximated the value of these discounts at almost \$100 million annually and anticipated a rapid increase in these values.

This special pricing program was extended in the 2011 to run through January 1, 2016. Since the State Legislature next convenes in 2017, this special pricing program must be extended in this 2015 session to avoid a gap. HB 1475 seeks to continue the program through 2024. TLA will continue to provide information about this legislation and what you can do to support this critical state policy matter.

Taking the Capitol by Storm: Libraries, Legislation, and Leadership (Ticketed)

9 am - 5pm, Tuesday, April 14

With the 84th Legislature in full swing, join colleagues and experts as you study key library issues and become an articulate and knowledgeable advocate with decision-makers. The first half of the preconference is an intensive training and skill-building workshop.

The second half is an afternoon of actual visits with legislative offices coordinated through TLA. Participants will earn a badge of honor to wear throughout conference. Lunch will be provided.

*Thank you for your support and passion for libraries.
Texas libraries need your voice!*

We also offer our thanks to Gale Cengage Learning, EBSCO Information Services, and LearningExpress, LLC. for their support of library advocacy.

Texline is produced by the Texas Library Association. It is published as needed to provide information on state and other policy matters related to libraries. For additional information, send an email to Gloria Meraz, Director of Communications, gloriam@txla.org.



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