



## PRIORITIES FOR THE 87<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### *Library Funding & Program Support*

The Texas Library Association's (TLA) almost 6,000 members represent academic, EC-12 school, public, and special libraries across the state.

**TLA supports the Texas State Library and Archives Commission's (TSLAC) \$71 million budget request and the Texas Needs Strong Libraries exceptional item.**

**Through TSLAC, Texas public, school, and academic libraries provide access to online resources valued at \$93 million at a fraction of the cost.**

Libraries of all types are centers of their communities, whether large cities, small towns, K-12 schools, or college and university campuses. All Texans - researchers, entrepreneurs, students, parents, policy makers, advocates, artists, writers, inventors, or citizens - benefit from access to and use of the vast resources of Texas libraries, and the knowledge and skills of Texas librarians.

### **Texans Need Strong Libraries (exceptional item #2)** \$3.75 million to enhance quality library services

The \$3.75 million exceptional item request includes funds to:

- Support workforce initiatives such as digital literacy, small-business development, STEM learning and workforce training programs.
- Support digital inclusion, including providing grants for equipment, devices and outreach technologies, and solutions to support community internet access.
- Continue access to affordable e-resources through TexQuest and TexShare.
- Increase digital access to primary resources.

This exceptional item will ensure that TSLAC is able to further invest in Texans libraries as they provide access to information, connect their communities to technology and essential internet services, help Texans to connect via online programming, support families with students attending school virtually, and offer training on technology and resources to assist educators teaching virtually.

### **The Last Word**

The COVID-19 pandemic has starkly demonstrated how critical vibrant and strong libraries are to their communities. TSLAC is a strong partner, working with libraries across the state to bring essential broadband services to communities, expand access to e-books and online resources, and support libraries as they continue to evolve to meet the needs of Texas' information economy.

