



Press Release

Massachusetts Library Association (MLA)

Massachusetts School Library Association (MSLA)

February 4, 2010

MA Libraries Rally at the State House for Legislative Day

Massachusetts library supporters will gather at the State House at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 9th, 2010 to rally against the impact of drastic funding reductions to the Commonwealth's libraries. The Governor's proposed FY11 budget for the state library budget is a **37.2% cut** from FY2009. The rally is sponsored by the Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) and Massachusetts School Library Association (MSLA) whose libraries are struggling to survive an onslaught of budget cuts in municipal and statewide funding at the same time that demand for library services continues to escalate sharply statewide. Services that are threatened by budget cuts include:

- Regional Library Systems, which coordinate the delivery of millions of library books, CDs and DVDS to residents and school libraries of the Commonwealth, and provide electronic research materials integral to learning and scholarship.
- Access to technology that is used more now than ever as so many residents have lost jobs and cannot afford computer and Internet resources. Schools also rely heavily on the informational databases provided by MBLC.
- Literacy programs that empower immigrants through language instruction along with strong school and academic libraries that foster learning, support curriculum, and materials for a growing English as a Second Language population. Library sponsored Homework Centers for students of all ages and abilities. Story hours for toddlers and children, summer reading programs and educational programs for residents of all ages.
- The Commonwealth's Talking Book Libraries are the "public" libraries for 22,000 active users who are legally blind, or physically unable to use printed books. The Talking Book Library in Worcester and the Perkins Talking Book & Machine Lending Agency, are in the midst of a historic transition of talking books from cassette tape to the new digital talking books.

Use of our libraries is at an all time high, with public library borrowing of materials increasing for the 10th consecutive year in 2009, with more than 57 million items transported across the state through regional delivery services.

Please join us at the State House on March 9th to rally for the survival of libraries!

Krista McLeod & Jackie Rafferty, Co-Chairs MLA Legislative Committee

Judi Paradis & Sandy Kelly, MSLA Legislative & Advocacy Chairs