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## Bill H564—why does it matter?

There is no mention of school libraries in Chapter 70, even though a substantial body of research since 1990 clearly demonstrates that good school libraries have a positive impact on student achievement. Administrators take this omission to indicate that school libraries are not a priority in Massachusetts schools.

Studies from 14 states demonstrate a link between student achievement on reading tests, literacy, or general learning and an adequately staffed and funded school library program<sup>1</sup>. This includes a study conducted at Simmons College showing that schools with library programs have higher MCAS scores, regardless of socio-economic or educational levels of the community.

H564 puts the word “libraries” into Chapter 70 so that school administrators will recognize that Chapter 70 funds can be used to purchase school library books and equipment.

This simple change will not cost any money. It will send an important message to school administrators and school committee members that school libraries remain a valued part of a public school education.

We urge members of the Joint Committee on Education to favorably vote to move H564 out of committee.

H 564: An Act to provide certain materials, funding, and staffing levels for school library media centers

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 70 Section 2 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after the word “Book” in line 38, the word “,libraries”;

by inserting after the word “books”, in line 39, the word “,libraries”;

and by inserting after the word “book”, in line 39, the word “,libraries,”.

<sup>1</sup> For specific study results consult the Massachusetts School Library Association website ([www.maschoollibraries.org](http://www.maschoollibraries.org))