

11/27/19

Proposal for Increases in the Illinois Public Library Per Capita Grant and School District Library Grant Rates

The Illinois Library Association supports an increase in the statutory amount allocated to public and school libraries via the Public Library Per Capita Grant and the School District Library Grant programs, respectively; accompanied by full appropriations for these programs. This support is based on the recently mandated increase to Illinois' minimum wage, which is a welcome development for valued and highly educated librarians and library staff, but which undoubtedly adds to libraries' budget pressure.

Illinois Minimum Wage Increases

The Illinois minimum wage was last raised in 2010, to \$8.25 per hour. It is slated to increase according to the following schedule:

Date	Wage	% increase over prior raise	% increase over 2010
2010	\$8.25		
1/1/20	\$9.25	12%	12%
7/1/20	\$10	8%	21.2%
1/1/21	\$11	10%	33.3%
1/1/22	\$12	9.1%	45.4%
1/1/23	\$13	8.3%	57.5%
1/1/24	\$14	7.7%	69.6%
1/1/25	\$15	7.1%	82%

Cost of Living Increases, 2010-2019

During the period 2010-2019, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose 18%. The first minimum wage increase on 1/1/20 doesn't represent a real increase for workers, because it does not quite keep pace with CPI; subsequent minimum wage increases do. All will impact libraries' budgets.

Per Capita and Per Student Grant Rates

The current statutory maximum per capita grant rate for public libraries is \$1.25, established in 1995; and \$0.75 per student for school libraries. Law allows for these to be under- or over-appropriated; in the 2010-2019 period it was under-appropriated six times and fully appropriated four times, never over-appropriated. We very much appreciate the recent full funding of this grant program in 2018 and 2019, but it is time for an increase in the statutory rate and full funding of the new rate.

	2019	18% Increase
Public Library Per Capita Rate	\$1.25	\$1.475
Public Library Per Capita Expenditure	\$15,207,931	\$17,945,359
School Library District Per Student Rate	\$0.75	\$0.885
School Library District Per Student Expenditure	\$1,330,569	\$1,570,071

Impact on Budget

The state's operating budget for libraries is currently around \$50 million.

Proposed Increase in Per Capita Public Library Expenditure	\$2,737,428
Proposed Increase in School District Library Expenditure	\$ 239,502
Total	\$2,976,930
Percentage Increase to Operating Budget	6%

Conclusion

Generally library boards and library directors support their staff and do not dispute the need for better library pay, but without additional sources of revenue other programs, services, hours, and collections, possibly even some staff members, will need to be cut. The Illinois General Assembly built in some relief for part-time teen workers, as well as a tax break for small businesses, but the tax break doesn't help libraries. The impact of these increases to the state budget is relatively small, yet will have significant positive impact on school and public libraries.

Annual increases to these programs should be benchmarked to CPI so that libraries' revenues do not continually lag increases in expenses.