

Cumberland County Library System State Funding Request - April 10, 2015

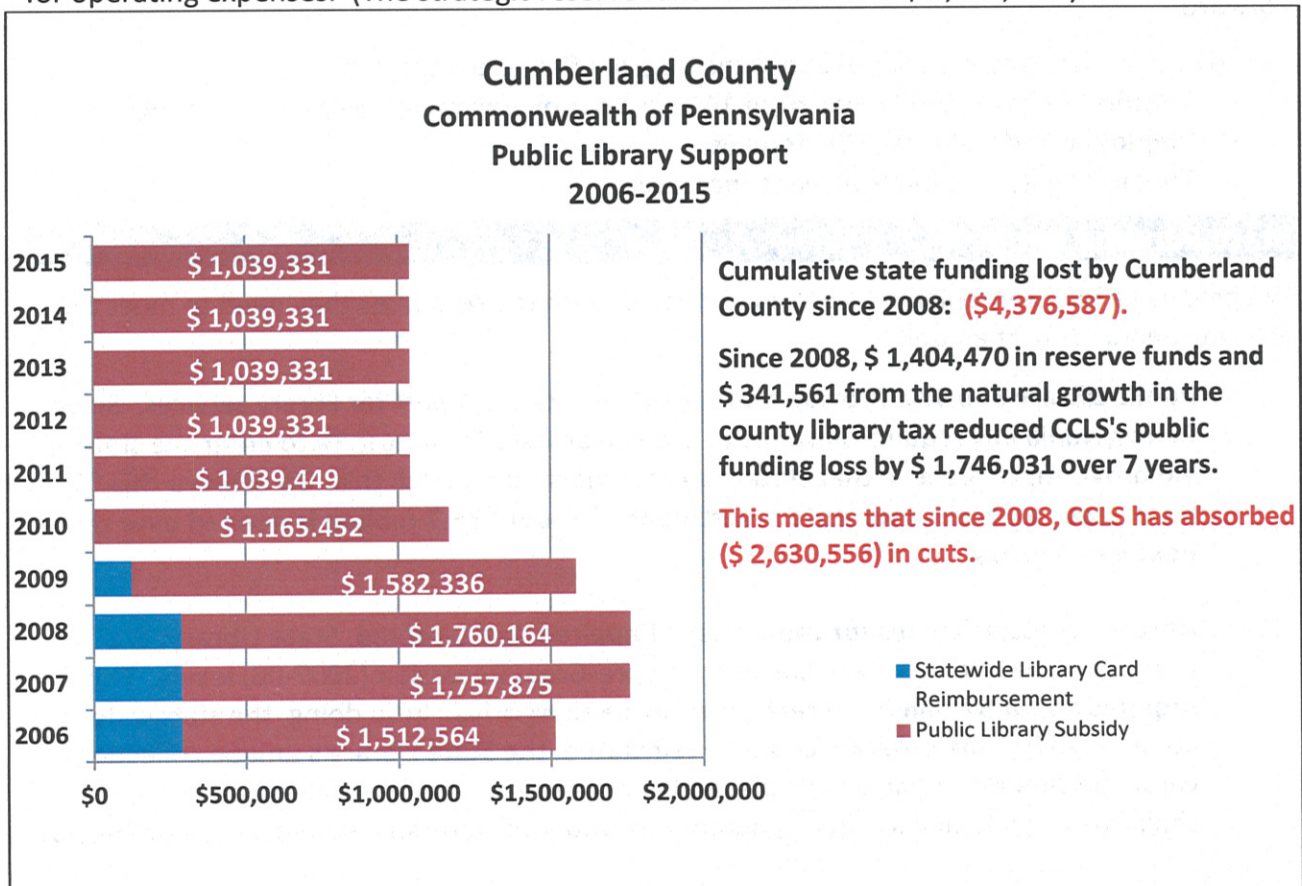
Cumberland County's Funding Situation:

Since 2008, the Commonwealth has reduced its overall support for library services by 33%.

State Library Service Support	THEN 2007-08	NOW 2014-15	Gov. Wolf Proposal 2015-16	Amount +/- Since 2007- 2008	Percent +/- Since 2007- 2008
Public Library Subsidy	\$75,750,000	\$53,507,000	\$53,507,000	(\$22,243,000)	-29%
Library Access	\$7,386,000	\$3,071,000	\$2,821,000	(\$4,565,000)	-62%
State Library	\$4,784,000	\$1,957,000	\$1,938,000	(\$2,846,000)	-59%
Library Services for Visually Impaired and Disabled	\$2,965,000	\$2,567,000	\$2,567,000	(\$398,000)	-13%
Total Appropriation	\$90,885,000	\$61,102,000	\$60,833,000	(\$30,052,000)	-33%

Cumberland County has experienced even greater state reductions. Since 2008, the **Cumberland County Library System has lost 41% or \$ 720,833** in annual state support. (About 40% or \$285,000 of that loss was Statewide Reimbursement Card funding). **Since 2008, Cumberland County has cumulatively lost (\$ 4,376,587).**

To mitigate this loss, the county library tax modestly grew \$341,561 (including projected growth of \$62,000 in 2015). In addition, \$1,404,470 in strategic reserve funds has been used for operating expenses. (The strategic reserve fund now stands at \$ 1,152,997.)



This means that since the Great Recession began 7 years ago, **Cumberland County Library System has absorbed (\$ 2,630,556) in public funding cuts.**

This represents **41% of 2014's annual budget of \$ 6,648,332.**

This has caused **funding instability, service reductions and lack of progress in establishing strategic partnerships and making much-needed technology investments.**

Why Increased Support is Needed

Cumberland County's residents rely on libraries for self-improvement in five essential areas:

1. **Basic:** Libraries **build literacy and learning skills from the earliest years of life**, sustaining **year-round learning** during the K-12 years and making **lifelong learning** possible for anyone.
2. **Information:** They help us **gain a command of new online resources and technologies** and give us the ability to **fully participate as citizens, workers, and consumers in a digital society.**
3. **Civic & Social:** They support our ability to **engage in and contribute to community life.**
4. **Health:** They guide us to lead healthier lives and make **more informed health care decisions.**
5. **Financial:** They prepare us to **make smarter financial decisions** at home and at work and **teach our youngest citizens** (even as young as preschoolers) to understand financial concepts and begin to think about **spending, saving, and contributing.**

To prepare citizens to meet the demands of life, libraries offer print and online resources, public programs, community outreach services, and staff members who are information experts. No organization in our state is better positioned than libraries to help move PA Forward.

In addition, we are also concerned about the ongoing financial impact of:

- **Inflation** — Since 2008 it has risen 14%, but our overall revenue has declined 8%;
- **Employee and Volunteer Clearances;**
- The possibility of **minimum wage increases.**

State Funding Request

We propose a long-term plan that provides libraries with the resources they need to meet the growing demands of the public:

- **Public Library Subsidy:** Provide more equitable state support for library services. Since Pennsylvania law requires libraries to provide at least \$5 per capita to enter the state aid program, we believe that state government should match this. **To achieve this "5 for 5" goal, an additional state investment of about \$36.7 million is needed over the next 3 to 5 years.**
- **Library Access; Libraries for the Visually Impaired and Disabled; State Library:** We propose restoration of these line items to pre-Great Recession (2007-08) levels. **This requires about \$7 million to restore all three categories.** In so doing, the statewide library card lending program could be reinstated, the State Library's unique collections would be supported and accessible, and library services for thousands with physical challenges—including a growing number of wounded veterans—could be strengthened.