

2024 State Legislative Priorities

The Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) is grateful to the Maryland General Assembly for its continued support of the essential role of public libraries in advancing the lives of individuals and the community as a whole. The Library serves the 967,000+ residents of Prince George's County, Maryland, through 19 branch libraries, a 24/7 online library, the County Correctional Center Library, and pop-up locations throughout the community.



L: President Barack Obama promoting PGCMLS' Rock Banned campaign on social media
R: "Big" author Vashiti Harrison and White House Press Secretary Karine-Jean Pierre at the Oxon Hill Branch Library

SUPPORT: HB489/SB434 – Education-State Library Resource Center-Funding

- Restores modest per capita funding increases to keep pace with inflation. The increase of \$0.55 per state resident is spread out over seven years through 2031.
- The Maryland State Library Resource Center (SLRC) provides critical information resources and public internet to Marylanders through their local public libraries. SLRC also provides staff development training and supports the Library Associate Training Institute (LATI), which offers expanded opportunities into library careers outside of a master's degree in library science
- In 2023, Prince Georgians received over 26,000 items via SLRC's statewide interlibrary loan program.
- PGCMLS customers, including all Prince George's County Public School students, have access to various educational databases, including Gale (test and career prep, reference ebooks and K-12 materials, legal forms, etc.), Heritage Quest (genealogy research), and Mango Languages, provided at no cost to PGCMLS. The cost of these databases has risen dramatically – the Gale databases alone have increased by 43% between FY21 and FY22 – and we anticipate similar increases next fiscal year.

*Sponsored by Delegates D. Jones, Allen, Bagnall, Bartlett, Ebersole, Fair, Feldmark, and **Lehman**; Senators King, **Augustine**, **Jackson**, Klausmeier, **Muse**, **Rosapepe**, and Zucker*

SUPPORT: HB785/SB738 - Freedom to Read Act

- Codifies Maryland's commitment to professional statewide standards for libraries, including principles for curating a responsible library collection, maintenance policies, and reconsideration requests.
- Allows libraries to tailor collections for their communities and protects those collections from deliberate theft.
- Prohibits county boards of education and governing bodies from retaliating against employees for acting in accordance with state standards.
- PGCMLS maintains a comprehensive Board-approved materials selection policy to fulfill the educational, informational, recreational, and cultural needs of Prince George's County.
- PGCMLS developed the national award-winning Rock Banned awareness program to inform customers about intellectual freedom and draw attention to the increase in book challenges nationally.

*Sponsored by Delegates D. Jones, A. Jones, Atterbeary, Ebersole, and Wilkins; Senators King, Beidle, **Benson**, Brooks, Elfreth, Feldman, Ferguson, Gile, Guzzone, Hettleman, **Jackson**, Kagan, Kelly, Kramer, Lewis Young, McCray, Waldstreicher, **A. Washington**, M. Washington, and Zucker*

SUPPORT: HB208/SB250 - County Public Libraries – Overdue Library Materials

- Maryland State Library Agency departmental bill that clarifies definitions in the existing statute.
- PGCMLS has been fine-free for all customers since 2020.

Sponsored by Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment + Ways and Means (MSLA Departmental Bill)

SUPPORT: HB825/SB248 - Libraries – Regional Resource Centers – Governing Board Membership

- Maryland State Library Agency departmental bill that restores the original intent of the 2023 legislation allowing the Southern Maryland Regional Library Association to have two community members from each county on their board. It has no impact on Prince George's County.

Sponsored by Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment + Ways and Means (MSLA Departmental Bill)

NEUTRAL WITH FORTHCOMING SPONSOR AMENDMENTS: HB825/SB248 - Education – Public Libraries – Collective Bargaining (Library Workers Empowerment Act)

- PGCMLS supports the rights of library workers, with a longstanding and collaborative relationship with UFCW Local 1994 MCGEO.
- Ensure that the Prince George's County Memorial Library System is exempt from legislation in order to maintain our current collective bargaining agreement.
- Support the amendments being worked on with the bill's sponsors and Maryland's public library administrators to ensure the legislation effectively meets the needs of all stakeholders.

*Sponsored by Delegates Solomon, S. Johnson, Forbes, **Harris**, A. Johnson, D. Jones, **J. Lewis**, Ruff, and Shetty; Senators Lam, Klausmeier, Guzzone, **Augustine**, Salling, M. Washington, Kramer, **Jackson**, Hettleman, **Muse**, King, and **Rosapepe***