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July 7, 2017

The Honorable Marco Rubio  
United States Senate  
284 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Urgent Request to Support FY 2018 Federal Library Funding

Dear Senator Rubio:

I am writing today on behalf of the Florida Library Association for the millions of Florida citizens, schools and businesses who depend on our state's libraries. As your Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies prepares to meet, we wanted to emphasize how vital and significant the funding is that comes to our state through programs under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) program managed by the Department of Education. President Trump effectively has proposed eliminating IMLS, LSTA, IAL and virtually all federal library funding. We are asking for your help in saving IMLS and these crucial resources by fully funding these key programs in FY 2018.


Between FY 2011 and FY 2016, Florida has received a total of \$47.83 million in support through a fair, population-based formula under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). These funds benefit literally every community and every citizen of the state. LSTA funds can be and are used for an enormous range of community and business-building activities, including: job training and retraining, computer instruction, resume and business plan design, applying for jobs online, online research resources for elementary through college level students, STEM education, and countless other socially and economically valuable pursuits. We urge you to provide the full \$186.6 million for LSTA in FY 2018 requested by 45 senators in their recent and bipartisan "Dear Appropriator" letter.

In addition, study after study has demonstrated the social and lifelong economic value of investing in the literacy of all Americans from the youngest age possible. The Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL)

program helps our school libraries (and non-profit organizations) buy badly needed books and other materials for the neediest children in our state and to assist their families in creating literacy-friendly, reading-enriched homes. It is the only federal program that provides dedicated funds to school libraries. We thus also ask, as requested by 37 of your Senate colleagues in a similar bipartisan letter, that IAL again be funded in FY 2018 at \$27 million.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin Shader". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robin Shader, President