

Indiana Library Federation Statement on Indiana Senate Bill 32

The Indiana Library Federation (ILF) does not support SB32.

SB32 eliminates public libraries from being identified as an independent taxing authority and would result in the loss of its main funding source. All public libraries report to a fiscal body as outlined in current state law. Oversight of public library budgets is done by the Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) and the State Board of Accounts (SBOA) and are routinely audited. The present budget process for public libraries is established, and transparent and includes a public hearing and sharing of annual budgets on Indiana Gateway. Library boards are appointed by elected officials to oversee library governance.

Libraries have evolved to meet the needs of their communities and provide vital services including:

- Early literacy programs
- STEM programming and/or dedicated makerspace labs
- Assist citizen access to government services or tasks (tax prep, unemployment benefits, workforce training)
- English Language Learner programs
- Senior adult programming combating the loneliness epidemic
- Community programming - music performances, art exhibits, author talks
- Public Wi-Fi
- Guide individuals to social service providers
- Provide accessible space for a variety of uses including: student individual and group study, entrepreneurship, and work from home alternatives

Libraries are an irreplaceable asset and SB32 does not consider the modern ways of how the local public library operates as a community hub or 3rd Place, meeting unique needs. Not providing library patrons with these services would directly affect public libraries from meeting Indiana State Library compliance standards.

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