



**Virginia Library Association
Legislative Program Goals
2020**

1. *Fully Fund State Aid for Public Libraries to improve services in every community across the Commonwealth.*

VLA proposes that the Commonwealth of Virginia fully fund its State Aid for Public Libraries program as called for in the Code of Virginia. Public libraries provide critical services to the disadvantaged and all Virginians every day.

FY2021 \$5.5 million (based on FY20 numbers)

FY2022 \$11 million (based on FY20 numbers)

Virginians visit their public libraries every day, relying on their library to bridge the digital divide, assist their job search, and support early childhood literacy and education initiatives. But there is more that they would do if they had the additional resources called for in the Code of Virginia for supporting State Aid for Public Libraries. Based on local needs, public libraries will be able to improve and expand access to these services to improve the community.

State Aid to Public Libraries has been deeply cut over the past 15 years, declining by over \$5 million in constant dollars to a level last seen in FY 1999. State Aid now falls nearly \$11 million short of the calculated funding level set forth in section 42.1-48 of the Code of Virginia. This has happened despite the 2001 Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) study that found the State Aid program to be an effective investment that leverages local spending and achieves cost efficiencies and economies of scale.

2. *Support the Library of Virginia.*

VLA supports the Library of Virginia's legislative and budgetary priorities.

Approved by Legislative Committee June 3, 2019

Approved by VLA Council June 7, 2019