

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 030358)

RESOLUTION

Requesting the Pennsylvania General Assembly to enact legislation to restore to the Commonwealth's budget for fiscal year 2004 full support for the public libraries of the Commonwealth, amounting to at least \$75.3 million, the level for fiscal year 2003.

WHEREAS, The budget of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for 2004 recently adopted includes a 50% reduction in aid to free public libraries; and

WHEREAS, This reduction threatens the Free Library of Philadelphia with severe curtailments of service, including the restriction of hours at all its recently renovated and updated libraries; and

WHEREAS, The Free Library is extremely and increasingly important in the lives of many hundreds of thousands of Philadelphians, as shown by the fact that last year the Library:

- circulated more than 7,000,000 books and tapes, more than ever before in its 111-year history;
- served 85,000 students from kindergarten through twelfth grade in its after-school program;
- reached nearly 54,000 children through its Summer Reading Program, including the highest-ever number of teens and a full 32% of the City's 6- to 12-year-olds; and
- presented more than 20,000 educational and enrichment programs to adults and children; and
- helped prepare thousands of pre-school children for learning to read, both through direct in-library experiences and through formally training more than 2,000 of such children's care-takers in methods of developing early literacy skills; and

WHEREAS, The Free Library provides special support to those experiencing economic hardships by:

- serving as Philadelphia's largest provider of computers accessible to all citizens, in locations convenient to homes and schools across the City;

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- annually serving – through its job-and-career information center – 6,500 adult job-seekers, via one-on-one assistance; a job fair; and workshops on resume development, career decision making, job hunting techniques, and job searching on the Internet;
- hosting a program of tax-filing assistance to low-income Philadelphians eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit (who, lacking such assistance, last year missed out on \$80 million in such credits); and
- offering these and other services without charge; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council hereby requests the Pennsylvania General Assembly to enact legislation to restore to the Commonwealth's budget for fiscal year 2004 full support for the public libraries of the Commonwealth and their many important initiatives for our children, amounting to at least \$75.3 million, the level for fiscal year 2003.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the eighth of May, 2003.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Patricia Rafferty
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Reynolds Brown

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Reynolds Brown, Goode, DiCicco, Cohen, Mariano, Miller, Ortiz, Tasco, Council President Verna, Rizzo, Krajewski, Nutter, Kenney, O'Neill, Blackwell and Clarke