

Sommer, Valerie

From: Sommer, Valerie
Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2024 4:48 PM
To: Sommer, Valerie
Subject: FW: [CLAtalk] News From the Capitol – Budget Actions- SENATE AND ASSEMBLY ADOPT 2024-25 BUDGET PACKAGE: Cuts Made to Lunch at the Library and CLSA
Attachments: ATT00001.txt

TO: CLA MEMBERS/ SYSTEMS/ NETWORK CONTACTS

FROM: Christina DiCaro, CLA Lobbyist

RE: **News From the Capitol – Budget Actions**

**SENATE AND ASSEMBLY ADOPT 2024-25 BUDGET PACKAGE:
Cuts Made to Lunch at the Library and CLSA**

On Wednesday afternoon, the legislature announced a two-house agreement on the 2024-25 State Budget, and subsequently released a document entitled, “Joint Legislative Budget Plan,” which attempts to address the sizeable and challenging budget deficit this year. Specifically, the plan proposes to make \$16.6 billion in wide-scale cuts to programs housed under state agencies and departments in order to balance the budget. While the legislature is attempting to minimize the cuts to K-12 schools, higher education, and health and human services, the deep cuts are being felt in various programs in the Department of Parks and Recreation, CalFire, the state water board, Department of Food and Agriculture, the California Energy Commission, Transportation agency, and on and on. Unfortunately, two important programs under the purview of the State Library – the Lunch at the Library program and the California Library Services Act – were targeted for cuts in the joint Assembly and Senate proposal. Those cuts were ultimately approved Thursday in a series of Budget hearings held by the Senate and Assembly.

You will recall that when Governor Newsom released his May Revision of the State Budget a couple of weeks ago, he proposed eliminating all of the Lunch at the Library funding – a total of \$5.5 million. The Governor also proposed a 50 percent reduction to the California Library Services Act which would take the funding from \$3.6 million down to \$1.8 million. Over the course of the last few weeks, CLA members and most notably, the Systems (thanks to the coordinated efforts of Carol Frost and Christine Powers) have been actively sending compelling letters to the key budget leaders, requesting that the legislature reject the Governor’s proposed cuts. During hearings in the Budget

subcommittees on the State Library reductions, I have also been able to address these cuts on the record to indicate CLA's strong opposition.

Yesterday, the five Senate Budget Subcommittees and the full Assembly Budget Committee held simultaneous hearings in Sacramento, to adopt their respective 2024-25 State Budgets. Ultimately, both adopted the following actions relative to these two programs:

Lunch at the Library: Provides \$3 million ongoing General Fund for the program. Essentially, the legislature felt that the Governor's \$5.5 million cut/elimination would be devastating for this popular program which serves lunch to children and teens during the Summer months. The Assembly and Senate restored \$3 million for Lunch at the Library on Thursday, and they further noted that the \$3 million in funding will be ongoing (versus "one time" in nature).

California Library Services Act: The legislature agreed with the Governor's proposal to cut the CLSA by 50%. The current baseline for the program was \$3.6 million. This cut will continue to provide \$1.8 million in ongoing funds for the CLSA.

During the hearing on Thursday in the Senate Budget Subcommittee on Education Finance where votes were taken, I thanked the subcommittee members under "public comment" for saving what they could of the Lunch at the Library program. I cautioned, however, that the cut may lead to some libraries dropping out of the program due to a lack of funding. With regard to the CLSA reduction, I remarked that the subcommittee had been receiving many letters on the issue, as the Systems and library community were quite concerned that the cut would lead to a disruption of access to library collections throughout the state. I asked the subcommittee to please work with CLA moving forward on finding ways to restore the harmful cuts to these two important programs.

You will also recall that CLA was quite concerned in January when the Governor proposed taking the remaining \$131 million (of \$489 million) from the library infrastructure grant program. At the time, the Governor's Department of Finance believed that there might be \$131 million in unallocated funds that the State Library had not yet sent out to grantees. However, after doing additional research, the Department of Finance eventually learned that the State Library had already encumbered the money, the checks had been provided to grantees, and the only portion of the library infrastructure grant funds left unallocated was \$4.4 million. That \$4.4 million figure represents library projects that did not get their required paperwork into the State Library by their deadline, or the locality could not meet the local match for the grant. Thursday, the legislature approved an action to take the \$4.4 million in remaining infrastructure grant funds to balance the Budget.

Of note, the Governor's May Revision and the Budgets approved by the legislature yesterday also make a 7.95% cut to State Library operations which could affect State Library staff and programs. (All state agencies and departments are being targeted for a 7.95% cut in order to try to balance the budget.)

While the majority of the Budget has been buttoned up with Thursday's procedural action, Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas and Senate President pro Tem Mike McGuire will begin a series of meetings over the course of the next week or so with the Governor to hammer out the final details on some remaining high-level issues. The legislature is required to pass a Budget by June 15th and send it to the Governor.

Thank you to all who took the time to write letters or make calls, most notably the Systems, the various Friends and Trustees, and CLA Legislative Committee members who made personal contacts with their legislators.