

Resolution for the Town Council

In support of fully funding state aid to libraries to the full Twenty-five (25) percent

Whereas, for people lacking broadband at home, libraries provide access to computers and Wi-Fi; and

Whereas, libraries are cornerstones of democracy, promoting the free exchange of information and ideas for all; and

Whereas, libraries are accessible and inclusive places that foster a sense of belonging and community; and

Whereas, today's libraries and their services extend far beyond the four walls of a building, and everyone is welcome to use their resources; and

Whereas, the Constitution of the State of Rhode Island in Article XII, Section I, states that it "shall be the duty of the General Assembly to promote public schools and public libraries, and to adopt all means which it deems necessary and proper to secure to the people the advantages and opportunities of education and public library services"; and

Whereas, in recognition of the importance of libraries in our society, the State of Rhode Island passed legislation setting the level of state aid for library services at a minimum of twenty-five (25%) of the amount spent from local tax funds and the library's private endowment; and

Whereas, the Governor's proposed FY 2027 budget funds state aid to libraries at 24.1%, which is \$9,627 less than the Town of Bristol would receive at the full 25%; and

Whereas, the Town of Bristol recognizes the importance of fully funding our public libraries and supports funding state aid to libraries at the 25% level in FY 2025; and

Whereas, H7691 and S2812 have been introduced in the Rhode General Assembly in support of full funding of state aid to libraries; and

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Town Council of Bristol, Rhode Island, as follows, that the Bristol Town Council, at the request of the Rogers Free Library Board of Trustees, does hereby support legislation which would restore funding for State Aid to Libraries to the full 25% level required in RI General Laws § 29-6-2 (a) and urges the General Assembly to work diligently for its passage.

Be it also resolved that the Bristol Town Clerk transmit forthwith a copy of this Resolution to the Governor, Speaker of the House, Senate President, Chair of the House Finance Committee, and to the members of Cranston's legislative delegation to the Rhode Island General Assembly.