



2017 Legislative Session

# LEGISLATIVE PACKET

Montana State Library  
**HB 261**

Short Title: Generally revise funding laws related to libraries  
Date: January 17, 2017

Rep. Frank Garner  

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Sponsor

#### Contact Information

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# Executive Summary

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**Short Title:** Generally revise funding laws related to libraries

1. **Synopsis:** The bill extends the sunset date for the statutory appropriation contained in 22-1-327, Montana Code Annotated until July 1, 2023. The appropriation of state general fund monies is made to Montana public libraries based on a per capita/per square mile formula found in Administrative Rules of Montana. The total appropriation is \$395,766. This amount is the equivalent of \$.40/capita of the population of Montana at the time the statutory appropriation was created in 2013. The statutory appropriation is tied to the decennial census. If passed, the amount of \$.40/capita will be applied to the population of Montana as determined by the official 2020 census. The appropriation passes through the budget of the Montana State Library. The State Library retains none of the funding for administrative purposes.

2. **Fiscal Impact:**  Yes  No  Uncertain

The fiscal note reports no increase over the existing appropriation. Because the statutory appropriation is tied to the decennial census, if passed with a new sunset date of 2023, Montana public libraries would receive an increase in state aid funding in fiscal year 2022. Based on 2016 Census population projections, total funding for the appropriation would increase by \$21,242.

3. **Opposition Expected:**  Yes  No  Uncertain

Interest Group	Position	Summary
Montana Library Association	Support	As the professional association for all types of Montana libraries, MLA is a strong supporter of this legislation. Over the past four years, representatives of MLA has testified in support of state aid before numerous legislative committees.
Local Government	Support	When this statutory appropriation was first past in 2013, MACo Executive Director Harold Blattie testified in support of this legislation.

**4. Contact Person(s):**

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## Section Analysis

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<b>Bill Section</b>	<b>Current Law Summary</b>	<b>Proposed Amendment Rationale</b>
1	Section 5 establishes a termination date.	The termination date is extended to 2023
2	Section 2 establishes an effective date.	The effective date is effective on passage and approval.

## Questions & Answers

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Question	Answer
What percentage of this funding actually goes to libraries?	ALL! The MSL does not retain any of the state aid funding to administer the program. This is impressive.
How much does my library get? How much did my library get before?	See spreadsheet included. The formula for how state aid is distributed is contained within Administrative Rule 10.102.4003.
Why do you want a sunset date on such important funding?	Not a matter of wanting but a matter of good policy and fiscal responsibility. In 2013 members of House Appropriations put a four-year sunset on the appropriation knowing the importance of evaluating funding.
Would libraries continue to receive state aid funding if this legislation is not passed?	No! When this statutory appropriation was created, the State Library's budget was reduced by \$102,000, the amount originally spent on state aid. The State Library no longer has funding in their budget to fund state aid without this this statutory appropriation.
Is this legislation an appropriate use of statutory appropriations?	Yes! The per capita/per square mile state aid is a statutory appropriation that was evaluated by the Legislative Finance Committee during the 2015-2016 Interim. As a statutory appropriation, state aid met all eight guidelines for statutory appropriations.
Why am I just hearing about this funding now?	There was not an opportunity to vote on this funding in the 2015 session. While no reporting requirements were attached to the appropriation, the MSL and MLA have reported back to the Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education as well as the Education and Local Government Interim Committees in order to provide detailed information about how libraries across Montana are using state aid funding.
Why should the state help to fund local public libraries?	Libraries are funded through a multitude of sources. Cities and counties cannot be turned to as an adequate source of funding. Local funding perpetuates the Haves and the Have Nots, with the wealthier areas able to provide more resources and more advanced library services. The State Library strives to level the playing field by establishing equitable programs and services and making sure they are available to all MT libraries. The per capita/per square mile state aid appropriation ensures every library patron in the state has access to quality library services.

<p>Are there any requirements for how libraries spend their state aid?</p>	<p>No, libraries may spend their state aid as they determine in order to best meet the needs of their local communities.</p>
<p>What must libraries do in order to receive state aid funding?</p>	<p>Libraries must adhere to public library standards in order to be eligible for funding.</p>
<p>Notable Legislative History</p>	<p>The original per capita/per square mile state aid legislation was created in 1989; however funding was not appropriated until 1999.</p> <p>From 1999 to 2013 there was NO increase in the amount appropriated for state aid. At that time \$102,830 per year was divided among the 82 public libraries in Montana.</p> <p>HB 203, passed in the 2013 Legislative Session, created the statutory appropriation contained in 22-1-327, MCA.</p>