



Our public libraries serve an important role in the lives of Ohio children and adults. The funding reduction faced by our libraries is one that will also be experienced by state government programs across the board.

My framework to balance the state budget includes a reduction in state aid to libraries in order to minimize the impact of \$2.43 billion in spending reductions that will impact services for our most vulnerable, especially children, the elderly and disabled. These cuts will help to address the \$3.2 billion budget gap without raising taxes on Ohio families and businesses. The framework reduces the size of government in line with the shrinking economy, and keeps our commitment to the classroom reforms that will better prepare Ohio students for jobs. All this will position Ohio for job growth and economic recovery.

Without doubt, what I have outlined requires tough choices. Many of the services that Ohioans have come to rely on will have to be reduced, and some suspended. This is not because those services are not worthy. It is because state government has to prioritize limited resources to make it through this recession. Every day, similar decisions are being made around countless kitchen tables and shop floors throughout Ohio.

I believe that libraries provide important services to members of our community. While many of us turn to our libraries for book clubs, summer reading and research projects, Ohioans also utilize the local library as a place to find free high speed internet access and to receive assistance with finding a job or filing their taxes. I am committed to the goal and vision of our libraries and the services they provide. During these difficult economic times, it is important that our libraries remain a haven for individuals to gather and utilize resources. That's why my framework commits \$531 million in funding for our libraries over the next biennium.

All Ohioans are making shared sacrifices. But I have faith that, with the commitment of our community members, we will be able to overcome today's challenges and continue working to build a stronger, better Ohio.

Ted Strickland

Ted Strickland, Governor