



214 N. Main Street, PO Box 337  
 Loyal, WI 54446  
 Phone 715-255-8189; Fax 715-255-8348

April 26, 2019

**Co-chairs Senator Alberta Darling and Representative John Nygren and members of the Wisconsin Legislature's Joint Committee on Finance:**

I am the Director of the small and rural Loyal Public Library in Clark County, which is a member of Wisconsin Valley Library Service (WVLS) headquartered in Wausau. Membership in WVLS provides the advantage of a strong network of resource sharing and mutual interdependence among 36 community public libraries in Clark, Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon and Taylor Counties.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for supporting Wisconsin libraries. The extra \$1.5 million added to the current state budget for regional public library system services by the Joint Committee on Finance in 2017 was welcomed as the first increase since system funds were cut 10% and frozen in 2012. It enabled our library system to deliver additional support to local public libraries by underwriting services that we would otherwise be unable to afford. While the Loyal Public Library is the heart and the body that our residents turn to in their time of need, WVLS provides the backbone that helps us support and lift our community. The state aid shared by WVLS and the other regional library systems in the state represents a vital investment in the strength of that backbone.

Libraries today are more about what they do for and with people in their communities than the materials that are available for check-out. Here are some of the benefits the Loyal Public Library provides to our community that are supported in part by enhanced state aid to WVLS in the current state budget:

- Assisting personal and professional workforce development through free online Gale Courses
- Free Wi-Fi and high-speed access in an area where internet service is poor
- Access to and assistance with computers that have the latest technology
- OverDrive access for eBooks and AudioBooks
- Early literacy programs to in-home daycares and our local Catholic School
- Makerspace kits for STEM programming that promote lifelong learning
- Expanded interlibrary loan network with shared catalogs and efficient delivery service
- Printing, copying, scanning and faxing capability

I respectfully support the Wisconsin Library Association's request for continuation of the additional \$1.5 million for regional public library systems invested in the current budget, boosted to \$2.5 million in 2019-2020 and \$4 million in 2020-2021. Small increases in state aid to maintain core services from BadgerLink, Newsline for the Blind and other state library resource contracts will also be much appreciated.

Libraries are the educational and social heart of every community. The citizens of Loyal are thankful for your financial support that enables their public library to thrive and provide the services they need.

Sincerely,

Teresa Hall, Director

Enclosures: Gale Courses testimonial letter from Barb Lucht, articles Clark County Press & TRG  
 Cc: Senator Kathleen Bernier, Representative Robert Kulp