

August 16, 2021

To the Members of the Human Resources Committee:

Subject: Agenda Item III.A Committee Action on State Librarian's evaluation for the 2021-2022 Fiscal year, State Librarian Priorities.

I am writing in opposition to Priority 1 of the proposed State Librarian's Priorities for 2021-2022 (Refresh the HSPLS mission and vision and expanding the Strategic Framework.)

Now is not the time to complete a revamp of the HSPLS mission, vision, and framework. In fact, it is advisable to wait – especially as the process relies on gathering stakeholder input. Indicator II for this priority reads, “By April 30, 2021, stakeholder input process will be completed.” I assume the year is a typo since this has not been achieved. But even assuming the completion date for this Indicator should read April 30, 2022, any data collected before our community has normalized, post-pandemic, will be influenced by pandemic related. For example, there are currently less patrons physically visiting libraries because of the pandemic, so a survey done now would disproportionately reflect the interests of patrons who are able to access the survey tool online. Until a good data sample can be obtained, the mission/vision refresh and framework expansion should be postponed. There is no specific importance or pressing urgency to justify rushing what should be a thoughtful process.

I strongly urge the members of the Human Resources Committee to not support or recommend approval of the proposed State Librarian Priorities for the 2021-2022 fiscal year without eliminating Priority 1.

If a replacement priority is necessary, work with the State Librarian to create a new priority which is mindful of present circumstances. Consider prioritizing goals reflective of current needs, like the improvement of internal communication within the Library System; timely filling of vacancies to ensure continuation of services; upkeep of safe and healthy library spaces for staff and patrons; and expansion of the Library System's virtual content with additional support for virtual programming and social media training.

Sincerely,

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