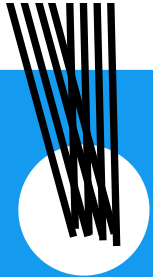


Connecticut Libraries

2025
LEGISLATIVE
AGENDA

Access to Information for All



BOOKMARK IT!

- Restore state funding for library service.
- Protect freedom to read in school libraries.
- Rein in the cost of library electronic books.

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Restore State funding for public
libraries, the State Library and
resource sharing.

“
Legislators should restore and increase State aid to library services by \$5.7 million. In 2008, the State provided \$13.2 million to support library services. Now in 2024, this figure is only \$10 million. This means that there has been no increase in state funding for libraries in 16 years. Factoring in inflation, this represents a decrease of over 45% in actual buying power.

Meanwhile, Connecticut’s public libraries are community anchors. Last year, Connecticut residents borrowed nearly 21 million items and connected to free library internet over 3.7 million times. Libraries play a crucial role in fostering lifelong learning and community engagement, helping to bridge the educational and digital divide and strengthen our democratic values.

The Connecticut Libraries’ budget proposal addresses inequities in library services, particularly in rural and urban communities. It ensures that every library can provide their residents access to information, learning and digital resources. Specifically, it includes restoration and expansion of state aid grants to public libraries, funds for shared technology and resource sharing, support for the Connecticut State Library and restoration of funding for the Cooperating Library Service Units.

Connecticut is 32nd in the nation in direct state aid to public libraries. We can and we should do better.



Connecticut Libraries

Access to Information for All **2025 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

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Defend students’ freedom to read in school libraries.

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Legislators should support legislation that ensures every school has a clear and transparent school library book reconsideration process. In 2024, Connecticut libraries worked with State Rep. Currey on HB 5417. This bill empowers educators, parents, and students to engage in thoughtful dialogue about the materials used in our classrooms, promoting a culture of critical thinking and respect for differing perspectives. By protecting access to a wide range of literature, we not only enrich the educational experience but also uphold the values of free expression that are vital to our democracy.

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Rein in the out of control cost to license electronic books and digital audiobooks to libraries

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Legislators should support reform to the library electronic book licensing marketplace. Publishers often charge libraries six to ten times what a consumer pays for the same eBook with more restrictive licenses. Last year, Connecticut public libraries spent over 6.5 million tax dollars on electronic resources including ebooks and digital audiobooks. By 2027, most of the content that our libraries have licensed will be gone and will need to be repurchased to retain access.

Libraries have doubled what they spend on eBooks and yet residents face wait times as long as six months. Libraries can’t afford to keep pace with demand. Connecticut librarians are working with State Reps. Blumenthal and Kavros DeGraw on a bill that leans on the State’s strong consumer protection law to require publishers to use fair practices when doing business with taxpayer-funded libraries.

For many people eBooks and digital audiobooks aren’t just a preference, they’re a necessity. Students with dyslexia and visual impairments depend on digital audiobooks. For people with disabilities, eBooks keep them reading. For those with mobility issues or who are homebound, eContent keeps them connected to the world.

