

To: Appropriations Committee
HB 6439 Proposed Budget Cuts to Connecticut Libraries
From: Richard Slone
227 New Milford Road East
Bridgewater, CT 06752
PAX1@AOL.COM

I am writing to you about the proposed \$100,000 budget cut to the borrowitCT library program.

I became an avid reader late in life. Once I retired I had the time to explore books and interests unrelated to my career. As my wife likes to say, I have embraced life long learning and it has been an eye opening experience!

I have enjoyed living in our small Connecticut towns all of my life. Living in Bridgewater for the past forty-five years I have found the staff of our local Burnham Library to be dedicated and eager to assist patrons in all manner of ways. However, being a very small library they have a limited collection for residents to explore. I read a lot of "cutting edge" science texts related to Quantum Physics and consciousness. At the moment I am also exploring books, both fiction and non-fiction, written by Black authors. At first I thought that my library would have few materials related to my interests. But then I learned about the interlibrary loan program! Through this program I request and receive several books each month from libraries around the state. Often the book I am interested in is rather obscure and only one library will have a copy. Yet, through this program, it "magically" appears at Burnham Library for me.

I have been hoping that this program would expand so that all of the libraries in Connecticut would be connected through one service. That would greatly increase what books would be

available through the loan program. You can, therefore, imagine my horror when I learned that the program is not only not expanding but may be defunded!

Many years ago there were public service spots on television encouraging people to use their local library with the song, "It's the latests, it's the greatest, it's the library!" I now know how true those words were. Every Connecticut resident, no matter their age, race, sex, creed, color, education, or national origin can enjoy their library. During these terrible times of the Covid pandemic libraries have adapted to make sure that residents would not be isolated from their services. While we are quarantined having books and other resources available has been, literally, essential.

I am asking you to please reconsider the defunding the library borrowitCT program. In fact, increasing the funding so that the program can be enlarged to reach more libraries and residents would be my request. Please see that this essential service continues to be available for each and every state resident.

Thank you for your time and efforts.