



## House Bill 1063

### *Libraries - Regional Resource Centers and County Public Libraries - Funding*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Ways and Means Committee

Date: March 5, 2014

From: Robin J. Clark

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** House Bill 1063. This legislation would provide additional funding for county libraries and regional resource centers by increasing the per-resident funding formula beginning in fiscal year 2016.

Maryland's counties share funding responsibility with the State for our libraries and support additional resources for them. County governments directed more than \$200 million of their operating budget general funds in fiscal year 2014 to supporting libraries. By contrast, the State provided \$69.5 million to libraries in fiscal year 2014.

Counties are proud to support libraries because they are an integral facet to a county's ability to build community, and we would appreciate additional State support to help them further their aims. Already, libraries provide a safe place for our children to spend time after school and they offer early literacy programs for young children. They also provide internet access to the public and support for job seekers and small business owners.

HB 1063 describes incremental increases in State funding for libraries and regional resource centers, with the aim of restoring the library funding that the State necessarily reduced during the recession. A restoration of State funding will help libraries to continue to offer community services that are key to our full economic recovery.

For these reasons, MACo **SUPPORTS** HB 1063 and recommends the Committee issue a **FAVORABLE** report.