



December 1, 2009

President Robert King
Council on Post Secondary Education
1024 Capital Center Drive
Frankfort, KY 40601

President King:

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the Kentucky Public Library Association. I am certain that you are fully aware of the critical shortfalls that must be addressed in the state budget in the coming year. Like you, I am an administrator and understand that no service, no staff position, no building comes without expenditure. I also understand that in order to set priorities for those expenditures then one must also understand the value of the service, the staff position, or the building to the organization and the people that the organization serves. With this present budget crisis, we are all looking closely at our lists of priorities and hanging on to those things that are determined to be most important.

Public libraries are and have always been a resource in the pursuit of education at all levels. The students who attend Kentucky's schools, colleges, and universities depend on public libraries on a daily basis to help them attain their educational goals. Both "virtual" students and the students on physical campuses look to public libraries for access to the internet and electronic databases for their research needs. Libraries, both academic and public, are expected now to maintain a strong online presence that includes access to high quality resources.

The Kentucky Virtual Library (KYVL) is one platform for the delivery of those resources. Individually, public libraries across this state simply cannot afford access to the databases that are currently available through KYVL. We understand their worth well: there were 686,000 searches of the 25 databases in KYVL that originated last year in public libraries. Still, as I said earlier, it is a matter of priority. You would be surprised at the number of public libraries in this state that operate with budgets (total budgets!) of less than \$200,000. Libraries with these scant revenue streams are not able to afford the types of databases that can currently be accessed, through both state and in-kind funding, via KYVL.

I am asking you, President King, to understand the importance and worth of KYVL. Please ask Mary Lassiter, State Budget Director, to make KYVL exempt from the state budget cuts. Kentucky's public libraries are a conduit for students seeking to improve themselves and to become better players as we move into this re-invented economy. I hope that you will do all that you can to preserve the funding of KYVL. It is critical to libraries of all types and to students of all ages.

Thank you,

JC Morgan,

Chair, Kentucky Public Library Association Cold Spring Branch

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