



Howard County Council's Budget Hearing
April 24, 2019

Testimony in support of Howard County Library System

Angela Brade

Chief Operating Officer – Support Services, Howard County Library System

Good evening. I am Angela Brade, Chief Operating Officer for Support Services of Howard County Library System. Tonya Kennon regrets being unable to be here this evening. She looks forward to talking with you at the upcoming work session. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of *all* of Howard County's residents, who, like you, place a high priority on education.

I will speak to our operating budget. Our Board Chair will address our capital budget needs.

Our proposed FY 20 budget places a high priority on a first-rate team of educators and support staff. We also look to sustain HCLS' popular instructional opportunities available through the many facets of our curriculum, including a new art education collection launched last month. Customers can borrow framed prints and photos from such artists as Frida Kahlo, Georgia O'Keefe, Ernie Barnes, Charles Bibbs, Mark Rothko, and Pablo Picasso, as well as such local artists as Marie McGing, Joan Lok, and the late Donald Reichle.

At Howard County Library System, we believe in the power of collaboration and demonstrate it through partnerships with the school system, community college, nonprofits, the business community, and government to take advantage of opportunities, narrow achievement gaps, and provide educational equity.

We thank the school system for collaborating with us to present academic competitions such as the HCLS Spelling Bee. We eagerly await Saketh Sundar's fourth consecutive appearance representing Howard County in the National Spelling Bee next month. And, as a number of you recently experienced, Battle of the Books included 315 enthusiastic teams competing not only for best score, but also awards for team spirit, name, civility, and costume at six simultaneous sites. This scholarly challenge has become a rite of passage for fifth graders that improves reading comprehension, builds vocabulary, and teaches teamwork and good sportsmanship. At these events and others, students of all ages and backgrounds participate on an equal, competitive basis.

Looking ahead, we are exploring new opportunities to incorporate arts education into our HiTech STEM curriculum and make it more accessible to more people. We also plan to launch Makerspaces later this year. We will prioritize early learning through collaboration with Head Start and preschool providers and enhancing children's spaces in branches with self-directed interactive educational resources. And, with the growing population of seniors aging in place, we will begin offering delivery of library materials to customers who are homebound.

Our budget represents less than two percent of the County's overall budget—a smart investment that pays dividends for our entire community. Again, thank you for the many ways you demonstrate your support.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Brade



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Testimony in support of Howard County Library System
Richard Alexander
Chair, Howard County Library System Board of Trustees

Good evening. I am Richard Alexander, a resident of Columbia and Chair of Howard County Library System's Board of Trustees. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the County Executive's budget proposal for Howard County Library System.

We are here this evening to request \$488,000 for planning the new HCLS Central Branch + Business/Arts Education Center. This new 100,000 sq. ft. branch, currently slated for Area 3 in the Crescent Neighborhood of downtown Columbia, will be part of a mixed-use project with the Housing Commission and Howard Hughes. The new branch will enable us to address unmet needs and provide opportunities for current residents of our community and add the needed capacity to serve future residents who will reside near the branch. The larger space will be filled with more classrooms and gathering spaces for children, teens, and adults; additional meeting spaces and parking; and provide more space for Project Literacy, our basic education initiative for adults working to complete external high school diploma requirements, seeking to earn U.S. Citizenship, and sharpen workforce development skills. Even after the recent renovation, the current Central Branch is undersized for the area served and would be further stretched to provide service to new residents who will reside in the planned downtown Columbia units.

Our request for planning funds is critical as 1) development plans for Area 3 are advancing, and 2) delaying the project could place a larger service burden on the current Central Branch which is already at capacity and potentially put us in the position of having to plan around a planned parking garage that will serve the library, housing commission units, and area tenants. Providing funding now enables us to plan efficiently and effectively, giving our community a Central Branch that is cost effective and will provide educational equity for children, teens, and adults.

We look forward to further discussing this request with you. Thank you for investing in our branches and the educational needs for everyone in our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Alexander



HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION

I, Richard Alexander, have been duly authorized by
(name of individual)

Howard County Library System _____ to deliver testimony to the
(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)

County Council regarding HCL^S budget to express the organization's
(bill or resolution number)

support for / opposition to / request to amend this legislation.
(Please circle one.)

Printed Name: Richard Alexander

Signature: *Richard Alexander*

Date: April 24, 2019

Organization: Howard County Library System

Organization Address: 9411 Frederick Road, Ellicott City, MD 21042

Number of Members: _____

Name of Chair/President: Richard Alexander, Board of Trustees Chair

This form can be submitted electronically via email to councilmail@howardcountymd.gov no later than 5pm the day of the Public Hearing or delivered in person the night of the Public Hearing before testifying.