

Sayers, Margery

From: Mickey Gomez <mickey.gomez@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 6, 2020 5:15 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Budget Testimony on behalf of HCLS
Attachments: Howard County Council's Budget Hearing - Testimony in support of HCLS.pdf

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May 6, 2020

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Friends & Foundation of Howard County Library System Board of Directors to request full funding for the Howard County Library System's 2021 Budget.

I have served on the Friends & Foundation Board since 2014, and have had the privilege of leading the Board since last November. I do so because I believe in our library system. I believe in the words written over each of the branch entrances: "Public Education for All." I believe in HCLS' ability to bring the community together - even in these days of social distancing - through innovative programming and an array of virtual resources.

The physical collections are one thing: the books, media, and periodicals; the music, movies, and shows. But when our Library reopens, community members can also borrow curated artwork, or a sewing machine from the DIY Center, or a ukulele. They can access 3D printers.

Every single person with a library card can go online not only to borrow an ebook or audiobook, but also to take online courses from Gale or Lynda.com. They can learn languages using a Rosetta Stone app right on their mobile device. They can research everything from consumer reports to history to genealogy, take practice exams, and prep for tests.

The Friends & Foundation Board is proud to continue to raise funds for above budget enhancements, such as Battle of the Books, the Spelling Bee and BumbleBee, STEAM classes and events, Teen Time, the Summer Reading Challenge, Online Homework Assistance, and the Enchanted Garden.

This partnership allows our library system to thrive, but it can't do it on donations alone. The public funding makes the core offerings possible. Private funding, through Friends & Foundation donors, allows HCLS to flourish.

I appreciate your consideration of this request, and thank you for your time.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Mickey Gomez

Chair, Friends & Foundation of Howard County Library System

(I've included a pdf of my testimony. Thank you.)

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