



THE
PUBLIC
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of Cincinnati
and
Hamilton County

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Press Release

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Library Board Votes to Seek a Levy in the Fall – Funds are Needed to Save our Library

State library funding has dropped by over 20% since 2000. With further reductions expected, the Board of Trustees of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County to save our library voted on June 9 to place a 5-year 1 mill levy on the ballot for the Hamilton County election on November 3, 2009.

Board President Elizabeth LaMacchia said the Library is seeking the levy because it must have a source of stable, adequate funding. She said that State tax revenue – the Library’s primary funding source – dropped 10% from 2000 to 2008, plus another 15% so far this year, resulting in an annual funding shortfall of over \$10 million by 2010. LaMacchia said, “Failure of this levy will be devastating. We are now in survival mode. Without the additional funds a levy would provide, we will be forced to severely reduce our services including closure of 15 to 20 branches. We cannot allow reductions on this scale to take place at a time when Library services are needed more than ever. We must save our Library.”

The Library has already made major cuts in spending. Since 2000, public hours have been reduced by 10%, staffing has been cut by 18.5%, capital expenditures have been postponed, and materials purchases reduced. At the same time, Library usage has increased by 17%, reaching a record high 15.6 million circulation in 2008 with more than 5.6 million visits to a Library location.

A 1 mill levy would cost \$2.50 a month for the owner of a residential property in Hamilton County with a taxable value of \$100,000. Revenue from this levy would enable the Library to keep branches open, keep the collection up-to-date, continue much-needed services to children, teens, and seniors available and meet the growing demand for Library service.

The Library receives no funding from the City of Cincinnati or Hamilton County and is the only metropolitan library in Ohio to receive no local tax support.

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