

Vincent Juliano
131 Appletree Drive
East Hartford, CT 06118

February 17, 2017

The Honorable Paul Formica
The Honorable Catherine A. Osten
The Honorable Toni E. Walker
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT. 06106

Re: borrowIT-CT (aka, Connecticard)

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee:

For over 40 years, the borrowIT-CT reciprocal borrowing program (formerly, "Connecticard") has supported the direct lending of library materials from any of Connecticut's locally-supported public libraries to non-residents of the community served by that library. The proposed budget for the Connecticut State Library includes no funding for borrowIT-CT. I strongly urge you to restore funding to borrowIT-CT before we lose this well-established and valuable service.

The value I speak of is demonstrated in several ways:

- 3.89 million books and other library materials were borrowed by non-residents in fiscal year 2016 thanks to this program.
- That figure represents approximately 15% of all loans by public libraries across our state.
- Based on the current cost of library materials, the monetary value of those loans has been estimated at \$58 million.
- This level of service has been provided at a "bargain." For example, a fiscal year 2017 appropriation of \$806,000 (subsequently reduced) is currently purchasing about the same \$58 million worth of service to Connecticut citizens.
- This program serves as a model for the goal of regional cooperation that I understand to be of interest to the Legislature. The relatively small amount of funding provided by the State for this purpose has given local, independently-governed public libraries an opportunity to demonstrate how regional cooperation through resource-sharing can save money and improve service at the local level. Libraries have been sharing resources via borrowIT-CT since 1973.

Let me add an example of how borrowIT-CT made a difference in my life. About two years ago, the East Hartford Public Library underwent extensive renovation work, which required it to close for a lengthy period. Since the construction work took longer than expected, library officials had to close even the temporary location they had established. During the period of closure, my wife and I made extensive use of a public library in a nearby town. We received excellent service and were accorded the same polite and efficient treatment that residents of that town received even though we were neither residents nor taxpayers in that community. BorrowIT-CT worked for us, just as it has worked for all Connecticut residents for over 40 years.

Thank you for your consideration.

Vincent Juliano

Cc: Representative Henry Genga
Senator Timothy Larson