

## Report of the Funding Restoration Task Force to the CAL Legislative Committee

Oct 10, 2012

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### RESOLUTION FOR COLORADO ASSOCIATION OF LIBRARIES MEMBERS

WHEREAS, currently, only one in three American kindergartners enters school prepared to learn, and that lack of preparedness persists throughout a student's academic career, and

WHEREAS, research shows that the highest rate of educational return comes from investing during early childhood, and it is estimated that for every dollar invested in early childhood education there is a seven to 10 percent per annum return, and

WHEREAS, the Lt. Governor is leading an ongoing Literacy Initiative for improving reading readiness in the state with the goal of having all children reading at grade level by grade three, and

WHEREAS, research shows that students who attend early childhood education programs are more successful in school and after graduation than those who entered without early childhood preparation, and

WHEREAS, students who progress through the educational system earn more than their less-educated peers and, in turn, generate a more robust economy for their fellow citizens, and are less dependent on state resources for assistance, and

WHEREAS, achieving higher levels of education is not only important for individual welfare, but it is critical for the health of the state's economy, and

WHEREAS, the presence of books in the home has as great an effect on the level of education a child will attain as having university-educated parents, and will propel a child 3.2 years further in education, on average, and

WHEREAS, libraries enable any child to secure the great benefit of hundreds of books in the home every year, and

WHEREAS, libraries already exist in virtually every area of the state to serve all ages and educational needs, and are trusted, efficient stewards of public dollars, and

WHEREAS, Colorado public, school, and academic libraries are significant, established, and highly effective players in the promotion of early childhood literacy and lifelong learning, and

WHEREAS, reductions in local funds for all types of libraries since 1994 have resulted in fewer hours, less staffing, reduced availability of materials, and decreased ability to foster early literacy, and

WHEREAS, use of libraries has increased dramatically since the economic downturn began in 2008, and

WHEREAS, the State Grants to Libraries statute §24-90-401 offers an existing mechanism for fairly providing educational materials through publicly-funded school, public, and academic libraries, and

WHEREAS, restoration of funding for State Grants to Libraries will provide critical support for statewide efforts to advance early literacy programs while also increasing access to educational materials for learners in all libraries,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Colorado Association of Libraries urges a funding appropriation of \$5.2 million for Colorado Libraries as an essential resource for early and ongoing literacy work for the betterment of Colorado citizens,

AND BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT restoration of an appropriation to the State Grants to Libraries to libraries will be provided to all eligible libraries in accordance with statute for the purpose of fulfilling Colorado's obligation for the delivery of vital library services.