

# Memo

**To:** Montana State Library Commission

**From:** Jennie Stapp, State Librarian

**Date:** March 18, 2016

**Re: Executive Planning Process legislative priority**

The State Library, with support from the Montana Library Association, recommends approval of draft legislation to extend the statutory sunset date for Montana public libraries per capita/per square mile state aid.

Budget Director Villa directed the State Library to prioritize this legislative request along with other legislative priorities for the 2017 session. This legislation is the only legislation the State Library plans to introduce. The State Library must submit our legislative priorities to the Governor’s Budget Office on April 15, 2016.

Per capita/per square mile state aid is a statutory appropriation contained in 22-1-327 Montana Code Annotated. It is currently scheduled to sunset on July 1, 2017. Without extension, beginning in FY '18 the State Library would have authority to distribute state aid grants to public libraries but no funding appropriation to do so. When evaluating options to extend the date of the sunset period MLA and the State Library evaluated the following criteria to settle a proposed sunset extension of July 1, 2023.

Pros:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Libraries would see a state aid increase in 2021.</li> <li>Though there is little consistency in sunset dates for other statutory appropriations six years appears to be a good average.</li> </ul>
Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fiscal note would show a budget increase in 2021 (based on 2015 census estimates, the increase would be from \$395,766 to \$413,179.60 or \$17,413.60)</li> <li>The fiscal note would show no additional increases after 2021.</li> </ul>
Cons:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legislation would not be aligned with the release of census data.</li> </ul>

**22-1-327. (Temporary) State aid -- per capita -- per square mile.** (1) The commission shall distribute grants to public libraries and public library districts on a per capita and per square mile basis.

(2) The total amount of annual per capita and per square mile funding to public libraries for each fiscal year is the base amount of 40 cents multiplied by the total number of residents of the state as determined by the most recent decennial census of the population produced by the U.S. bureau of the census.

(3) The amount determined under subsection (2) is statutorily appropriated, as provided in [17-7-502](#), from the general fund to the commission for distribution as state aid to public libraries. (*Terminates July 1, 2017-2023 -sec. 5, Ch. 244, L. 2013.*)

**22-1-327. (Effective July 2, 2017 2023). State aid -- per capita -- per square mile.** The commission shall distribute grants to public libraries and public library districts on a per capita and per square mile basis.