

Updates on SB 611 - Michigan Library Privacy Act

March 26, 2020

On March 12, MLA Executive Director, Deborah E. Mikula, testified at the State of Michigan Judiciary Committee Hearing in support of Senator MacGregor's Senate Bill 611. Supportive testimony was also delivered by Lance Werner, Director of the Kent District Library, who accompanied Senator MacGregor, and non-verbal support was issued by 10 public libraries and cooperatives.

Last October, Senator MacGregor introduced SB 611 to amend the Michigan Library Privacy Act, 1982 PA 455. The intention of his bill was to enable libraries to work with law enforcement when the library is a victim of a crime. After hearing both concerns and support from the Michigan library community on Senator MacGregor's proposed amendments to the Privacy Act, MLA helped draft a substitute bill that clarifies and updates SB 611. The proposed substitution bill removes obstacles and legal barriers libraries sometimes face when a crime has been committed in the library while providing for continued protection to patron privacy.

The Judiciary Committee, led by Senator Lucido, asked clarifying questions and planned to meet the following week to hold a second hearing to finalize the forward movement of the bill, but the global health crisis closed down all non-essential committee meetings until further notice. Once the "Stay at Home" order from Governor Whitmer is lifted, MLA will continue to advocate for the passage of substitute SB611.

We will keep you informed as the process moves forward.