



**Vermont
Library
Association**

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www.vermontlibraries.org

March 18, 2021

Dear Senator Campion, Senator Hooker, Senator Perchlik, Senator Lyons, Senator Chittenden, and Senator Terenzini,

We are writing to urge your support for S.26, An act relating to the Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont and the Department of Libraries. This bill proposes to establish a Working Group on the Status of Libraries in Vermont to report on the current status of Vermont's libraries and recommend improvements to the public library system.

The 2019 Gallup Poll showed that visiting the public library is the most common cultural activity that Americans engage in, even beating out going to the movies. Vermont libraries are no exception! Our public libraries already do so much to serve our communities, help Vermonters to learn, to meet their basic needs, to engage with their communities, and to have fun. Facts relating to public library usage in Vermont for FY2019:

Vermont Public Libraries logged 4,275,358 visits & loaned out over 3.5 million items



**Vermont Public Libraries Help You Find the Answer: Locating,
Accessing & Evaluating Up-to-Date Information**

In FY2019, Vermont Public Libraries answered 305,765 reference questions.

Vermont Public Libraries Bridge the Digital Divide:

Providing Free Internet Access Through Computer Use & 24/7 WiFi.

25,000 Vermonters don't have access to a high-speed broadband connection.* In FY2019, Vermonters used their Public Libraries' WiFi to connect to the internet 587,919 times.



Vermont Public Libraries Connect Communities

Library programs offer an opportunity for cultural enrichment, skill building, and connection. In FY2019, Vermont libraries offered nearly 30,000 programs, attended by over 417,000 community members.



As you can see, Vermont Public Libraries are doing our best to serve our communities: we engage, we educate, and we entertain. But we could do an even better job. **The Working Group bill is a critically important step to improve Vermont public libraries.** Thank you so much for supporting this important bill. As members of the Vermont Library Associations' Government Advocacy Committee, we so appreciate the work you do.

Very Sincerely Yours,

Barbara Ball (Windsor Library), Amy Williams (Rutland Free Library) &
Margaret Woodruff (Charlotte Library); VLA Government Relations & Advocacy Committee