

To everyone on the committee,

Thank you so much for this important discussion and consideration. I live in Damariscotta, ME and the Skidompha Library is a critical resource in our community that offers a safe space for everyone from kiddos to the elderly. Creating a committee to study library services, the roles that libraries play in communities, and the access to resources that libraries offer in our beautiful state is a great starting point towards supporting the vital role libraries play in not only our day to day lives but also in our development as a community today. I hope the committee gives legislators a chance to see the vital role libraries play, so that they can continue to provide funding and legislation to protect these critical institutions and the statewide Maine library network itself.

Here are only a few of the VITAL services libraries provide to their communities:

- Libraries are safe for everyone
- Libraries are one of the few indoor spaces people can enjoy without having to buy anything.
- Libraries cultivate artists and their work in our communities.

And if I could just take a moment to brag about Skidompha Library. . . it is one of those places that my family and I can walk into and feel completely at home.

There is a constant hum of creative and learning energy. In addition to the free food pantry (with fresh veggies from local farms), free theatre classes for teens, free tabletop gaming groups, and free tax prep services, it also offers book clubs that have changed my kid's perspective. He still revisits books and activities that he was given (for free!) and uses them to drive his own creative work and understanding of the world. I can't and refuse to imagine Damariscotta (or any of the surrounding towns it serves) without Skidompha.

This committee to understand libraries in our state is needed now more than ever because federal funding is no longer guaranteed, and it is up to our state legislators and our communities to understand why libraries are critical to our future and do what is necessary to foster their continued impact and survival in our wonderful state.

Sincerely,

Teralyn Reiter
Damariscotta Resident.

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Damariscotta
LD 1404

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