

House  
Legislative  
Oversight  
Committee



Executive Summary:  
**South Carolina State Library**

October 2022



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# FINDINGS

The Subcommittee has seven findings. The Subcommittee has [recommendations](#) to address some, but not all, of these findings. However, the Subcommittee makes the findings to note information that a member of the public, or General Assembly, may seek to know or on which they may desire to act.

## State Library

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1. The State Library budget experienced cuts, in FY2008-09, to State Aid allocations designated for county public library systems. Funding levels did not return to FY2008-09 levels until FY2019-20. [SEE RECOMMENDATIONS #1 AND #6](#)
2. Recruitment and retention of employees is an issue with the State Library as it is with many other state agencies. Contributing factors may include lack of salary competitiveness, labor competition, and reallocation of vacant position salary dollars to support existing staff salaries. [SEE RECOMMENDATIONS #7 AND #8](#)
3. While the State Library's services are accessible to all, they serve as the public library for the blind and visually impaired. [SEE RECOMMENDATIONS #2 AND #11](#)
4. The agency offers differing programs and services to South Carolina libraries. According to the agency director's testimony during the study, "if it happens in a library, we consult on it." This includes providing access to training on controversial topics and issues (e.g., drag queen story hour, etc.) of interest to the public. [SEE RECOMMENDATION #17](#)

5. State Library staff, as approved by the agency director, have participated in agency funded travel for county library site visits, national conferences (e.g., Washington, DC; Illinois; California; Montana; etc.) and international conferences (e.g., Greece and Poland) at a cost of \$398,430 from FY 2017-20. Currently, no approval beyond an agency head is required for international travel by state employees. [SEE RECOMMENDATIONS #15, #16, AND #17](#)

## Public (County) Libraries

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6. According to the State Library's survey of public (i.e., county) libraries, 38 respondents indicated they needed new libraries to meet the needs of the population.

## State Agencies

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7. Collaboration, among the various state agencies and their stakeholders (e.g., utilizing common information and entering into intra-agency agreements), is imperative to increase efficiencies in state government operation

# RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee has 18 recommendations (four to [General Assembly](#); two to [State Library Board](#); and 12 to [State Library](#)) that continue, curtail, and/or eliminate agency programs, and include areas for potential improvement. The Committee recognizes these recommendations will not satisfy everyone nor address every issue or potential area of improvement at the agency.

## To the General Assembly

### ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Consider designating an authorizing agent to review and approve any foreign travel of a state employee regardless of the source of funds financing such travel.

### MODERNIZATION OF LAWS

2. Consider updating language to reflect modern descriptive forms and terms of speech, by amending S.C. Code Sections 60-1-80, 60-1-120, and 60-1-170.\*
3. Consider eliminating outdated requirements related to the agency's duty to encourage, advise, and assist with the establishment, operation, and coordination of libraries of state institutions standards by amending S.C. Code Sections 60-1-110.\*
4. Consider updating language to reflect library network technological advancements, by amending S.C. Code Sections 60-1-150.\*

## To the State Library Board

### ACCOUNTABILITY

5. Require onboarding and annual training for board members.

6. Implement a policy requiring agency foreign travel requests approved by the director, be vetted for final approval by the board.

## To the State Library

### ACCOUNTABILITY

7. Request the Office of the State Inspector General conduct an employee satisfaction survey upon approval of the Committee report. Agency leadership must report survey findings to the Committee and present an action plan to address identified opportunities for improvement.
8. Conduct annual employee satisfaction surveys, develop a corresponding action plan, and submit the survey results and action plan to the agency's governing board for review.

### EFFECTIVENESS

9. Develop a strategic marketing plan designed to promote development and extension of library services throughout the State; inform stakeholders (e.g., the General Assembly, state officers and agencies, and state government employees); and improve general knowledge of State Library services, programs, and offerings.
10. Develop a written process for the agency's existing practice of identifying literary works, art, historical items (e.g., music, traditions, stories, etc.) and other such elements, for

purposes of conservation, preservation, and perpetuation.

- 11.** Develop a Talking Books Services (TBS) philanthropic donations strategy to effectively identify donors/sponsors and raise funds for approved TBS programming and services.
- 12.** Conduct an annual survey to evaluate K-12 schools, public libraries, and academic institutions knowledge of Discus, South Carolina's Virtual Library, and its available online resources.
- 13.** Create a strategic plan to increase awareness and utilization of Tutor.com.

workshops and webinars to library staff.); and State library service utilization by customer type (e.g., public, teachers, county libraries, etc.).

- 18.** Evaluate the efficacy of developing an interactive map to identify county library locations and incorporate a system to identify areas of the state in need of additional library facilities based on per capita population.

## EFFICIENCY

- 14.** Develop a recruitment and marketing strategy designed to increase the number of community volunteers in support of agency programs and services (e.g., Talking Book Services, etc.).
- 15.** Develop a baseline Megabits per second (Mbps) standard, for school districts and public libraries, and include it in the South Carolina Public Library Standards and Guidelines document.
- 16.** Update the South Carolina Public Library Standards every five years, or as agency leadership determines necessary within that time frame.

## TRANSPARENCY

- 17.** Create systems to track the number and type of consultative services requested by individual county libraries (i.e., services to children and young adults; library management and administration; advocacy; public relations and marketing; facilities and planning; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and outreach services best practices; and developing and presenting

*An asterisk (\*) indicates the recommendation was proposed by the State Library Study of the State Library*