

# MULTNOMAH COUNTY

## Measure 26-143

### BALLOT TITLE

#### FORM LIBRARY DISTRICT WITH PERMANENT RATE TO FUND LIBRARY SERVICES

**QUESTION:** Shall dedicated library district fund Multnomah County Library hours, services; rate limited to \$1.24 per \$1000 assessed value beginning 2013?

**SUMMARY:** If approved, the Multnomah County Library District would be formed with a permanent rate dedicated to library services, operations, books, materials, programs, activities and oversight of the district. Its boundaries would include all territory within Multnomah County. Formation of a District would do the following:

- Provide permanent and dedicated library funding up to \$1.24 per \$1000 of assessed value;
- Restore and retain library services such as summer reading, books, student and jobseeker support, and outreach to senior citizens;
- Prevent reductions in services, programs and activities, and hours.

Library services are a matter of county concern and the District will have the powers granted to library districts and public libraries under state and local law.

The formation of a District will ensure a dedicated long-term funding source for library services, allowing libraries to retain educational resources and programming. The Board of County Commissioners, sitting as the Library District Board, will serve as the governing board of the District to provide oversight and accountability. A Library Advisory Board will provide community input.

- **Programs and activities:** for school age children, story hours for babies and toddlers, summer reading, literacy services for children in child care, homework help, programs for teens and programs helping parents teach their kids to read
- **Summer Reading:** Over 100,000 kids participated in this year's Library's Summer Reading program, including the majority of the county's elementary school children
- **Events for kids and teens:** Nearly 255,000 people attend each year.
- **Book delivery** to homebound seniors and assisted living residents
- **Remote Online Access:** 24/7 online access to information, learning resources, and the library catalog

Among US libraries serving fewer than 1 million residents, Multnomah County Library ranks No. 1 in annual circulation of books and materials, according to the 2012 Public Library Data Service Statistical Report.

Providing library services is a matter of county concern and the voters authorized this method of formation in November 2010. The Library District will have the powers granted to districts and public libraries by state law and by the Charter. There are currently 25 library districts around the state of Oregon.

The Board of County Commissioners, sitting as the Library District Board, will serve as the governing board of the new Library District to provide oversight and accountability to the public. A Library Advisory Board will be formed to provide community input on matters of library services.

Submitted by

Jenny M Morf  
County Attorney  
Multnomah County

### EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Library services are currently provided by Multnomah County and funded through general fund dollars and a serial levy. These funding sources are not stable. The County's general fund has experienced budget shortfalls and a library serial levy requires voter approval every three to five years. This year, Multnomah County Libraries had to reduce services by 14% including cutting hours to 44 per week – the lowest of any library system in the region. Library programs for kids, families, senior citizens and jobseekers, book budgets and staffing have also been cut.

Formation of a Library District will secure a permanent source of funding for Library services in the County. All dollars collected for the library district would go only to library services. Library funds could not be used for other programs.

If approved, the Multnomah County Library District will be formed with a permanent rate up to \$1.24 per \$1000 of assessed value. The typical homeowner will pay \$49 a year above the cost of the current levy or \$.89 per \$1000 assessed value. The boundaries of the District will include all territory within Multnomah County.

The newly formed Multnomah County Library District will provide:

- **Libraries:** Hours at all 19 library branches including Central Library
- **Books,** research documents and other materials
- **Trained Staff:** Library staff answers 870,000 reference questions a year.
- **Career & Employment Services:** Library services for jobseekers, small business owners, and English language learners
- **Internet:** Free computer and internet services for those without access at home

# MULTNOMAH COUNTY

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### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

#### Good Libraries Make a Great Community

#### Vote Yes on 26-143 – a Library District for Multnomah County

With 19 locations throughout our community, our libraries help make this a great place to live.

Our libraries:

- **Teach children to love reading and learning**, with early reading programs and storytimes.
- **Are vital to schools and education**, with homework help, summer reading programs and by giving students a safe place to study after school.
- **Keep people connected**, delivering over 200,000 books a year to people with barriers to visiting the library.
- **Are an indispensable resource for job seekers**--one of the few places where unemployed people can get help searching for jobs--including resume and interviewing advice.

But our rollercoaster system of temporary funding means our libraries constantly face uncertainty and frequently must cut services, programs, hours, activities, and budgets for books.

#### Measure 26-143 Will Change That for the Better

By establishing a Library District for Multnomah County we can:

- **Provide dedicated, stable funding** for libraries into the future.
- **Restore recent cuts** – open hours will increase from 44 hours to 57 hours a week.
- **Protect and restore programs** for children, students, seniors and job seekers.
- **Ensure money collected for the Library District cannot be used for other programs.**

#### How Does It Work?

- Funds for the Library District will replace the current levy so we won't pay that anymore.
- The District permanent rate is limited to \$1.24 per \$1,000 assessed property value and cannot change. It will likely begin at \$1.18 per \$1,000 and will only rise over time if needed.
- The typical homeowner will pay an additional \$49 a year for the libraries.
- There will be no new layer of government: the Multnomah County Commission remains the Library District's governing body.
- There is real accountability, with independent oversight and audits.

Learn more at [librariesyes.com](http://librariesyes.com)

*(This information furnished by Heather McGivney)*

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### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

#### Volunteers Support Our Libraries

We are volunteers at our local public libraries, and we love doing it!

We help out with activities like teaching computer classes, repairing books, and providing early literacy support to families and kids.

We know how important the libraries are because we see so many people there using them. And in the last few years, even more people are using them because they are a free resource open to everyone.

Our libraries have gone through ups and downs in funding. Sometimes they have full funding and sometimes not, which has meant big decreases in services.

- Right now the libraries are only open 6 days for a total of 44 hours a week, when they have been open as much as 70 hours a week in the past.
- Programs and services for families, kids, senior citizens, and job-seekers are not available as often and for as many people as want them.
- Money for new books, materials, and equipment has been reduced.

It's a problem for our libraries to only rely on temporary funding.

We support creation of the local Library District because it will dedicate stable funding to our libraries. We can restore cuts to services and hours, and fund them into the future without money being diverted to other programs.

The library has 1800 volunteers, like us, who contribute their time to the libraries. But volunteers can only do so much. We need enough open hours, and expert staff to provide individual customer service to the library users.

**Please join us in supporting our libraries. They do so much for us. They make us a stronger community. Let's return the favor.**

**Andrea Dobson**,  
Volunteer,  
Central Library  
**Anne Pearson**, Volunteer,  
Hollywood Library

**Heather McGivney**,  
Volunteer,  
Gresham Library  
**Mary Monson**, Volunteer,  
Central Library

**Sandra Barker**, Volunteer  
Title Wave Bookstore

*(This information furnished by Susan Kelly)*

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### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

**Libraries help people find jobs.**

**Vote yes for our Library District: Help provide stable funding for programs that help job-seekers.**

My name is Tom, and like others I'm in the process of looking for a new job.

**Looking for work can be hard, but the library is here to assist with computers, services, classes and programs that really help:**

- Public libraries are the main source of Internet access for over 75% of people who don't have access at home or work. These days, it's hard to find a job without a computer
- Library staff and resources can assist people with applying for unemployment
- Libraries conduct free computer classes in everything from word processing to building a spreadsheet to designing your own web site

**The library also provides more in-depth help for job-seekers in the new economy:**

- Job search strategy workshops – a three-part series to help us deal with the new realities of looking for work
- Library classes on interview preparation help us build confidence, be ready to answer difficult questions and participate in practice interview and receive expert feedback so we feel fully prepared on interview day!

The library also has **resources for entrepreneurs** ready to launch or expand their own business!

People looking for jobs need the libraries, but our libraries are currently underfunded, and that means they're only open 44 hours a week--the shortest of any library system in our 4-county region.

They are currently closed Mondays and only open until 8PM two days a week. When the library has to close early, it makes it hard for job-seekers looking for new work to access services.

**Please vote YES to restore and protect services to help job-seekers.**

Good libraries mean a great community—and that includes getting people back to work. Vote YES for our libraries and our future.

**Tom Mattox, Portland**

*(This information furnished by David Lewis)*

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### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

**Join Local Teachers in Supporting a Local Library District!**

**Our Libraries are central to helping students and teachers succeed: we need them, we use them and we urge you to vote YES!**

As local public school teachers, we depend on our local libraries. So do our students and their families.

As teachers, we need the Library District, to provide stable funding into the future for libraries—which we really count on!

Here are just some of the services the library provides to teachers, schools and students. With a Library District, they would be fully restored and funded into the future:

**School Corps: Outreach to every single public school in our county, offering teachers:**

- Books and materials on requested topics for individual teachers
- Creation of customized lists of books for teachers and students
- Detailed web assistance for students

**Developing student research skills by teaching:**

- How to use research tools at the library
- How to safely use the Internet for research

**Extra help for kids who need it, including:**

- Library staff, who visit 49 targeted schools, serving 3rd -6th graders who need extra help to succeed in school;
- A Booktalkers after-school program delivers books and presentations to 17 nonprofit sites serving at-risk youth and delivers book buckets to 19 more.

And, our libraries **offer homework help for free** to every student in Multnomah County, either in-person or through an on-line tutor. This is especially important for kids who need a safe, structured place to go after school.

**Creating a Library District will help ensure that our libraries can continue to be an indispensable partner to schools, teachers and students.**

**Join us in voting YES for our Libraries!**

**Robin Corrigan,**  
9-12<sup>th</sup> grade teacher

**Lisa Kane,**  
3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher

**Pat Gonzales,**  
12<sup>th</sup> grade teacher

**Patty Klindt,**  
6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher

**Emy Markewitz,**  
3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher

**Dawn Martin,**  
9-12<sup>th</sup> grade teacher

**Jim Perenboom,**  
9-12<sup>th</sup> grade teacher

**Nancy Sullivan,**  
Teacher-librarian

*(This information furnished by Kirsten Leonard)*

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## Measure 26-143

### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

#### **Our Libraries Help Kids Learn to Read and to Get Good at it!**

Our libraries help prepare our community's youngest as well as our most vulnerable kids for learning and for lifelong success. But these programs are at risk because unstable funding makes it hard for the library to plan into the future and maintain services at the current level.

The library prepares thousands of young minds for school by sharing ways to read, sing, talk, write and play with books.

- First-time parents receive an invitation to the library when their child is born in Multnomah County.
- The library holds classes to teach parents how to help their kids learn to read.
- Each day, hundreds of children and their parents engage in storytimes both at libraries and in the community. Storytimes serve nearly 120,000 young children last year.
- Library staff visits child care centers, Head Start, teen parent programs, substance abuse treatment facilitates and incarcerated parents to teach people how to read to their kids.

#### **The earlier kids learn to read, the greater their chances of success in school and lifelong achievement.**

The library serves 26,000 individual children and parents at risk for low literacy and assists in preparing them to start school ready to learn.

- Working with community partners like local health clinics, homeless shelters, and mandated parenting classes, librarians teach techniques for developing early literacy skills through parent engagement and sharing of high quality books.
- The library's Early Childhood Services makes a monthly stop at 540 home and center based childcares facilities. Each site receives a fresh collection of books that encourages reading and early literacy. This effort provides over 5,000 young people with an ever-changing library of over 100,000 high quality books.

Let's keep these services available and accessible to make sure every kid can achieve school success.

**Vote YES for stable funding. Vote YES for the Library District.**

*(This information furnished by Kristi Jo Lewis)*

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### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

#### **It's incredible how much the library does to promote learning, and how well the library partners with schools to help kids succeed!**

Vote yes to restore and maintain programs like these:

- The library offers more than 17,000 different classes and events for youth each year. Last year, over 255,000 youth participated in library programs ranging from book discussions to arts and cultural exploration to life skill building.
- The library's innovative School Corps program connects students and educators with the resources of the public library – directly serving 48,000 students in FY12.
- Library staff create materials, gather books, and provide support to over 1,500 individual teachers.
- Books 2 U brings trained "book talkers" into 3-6 grade classrooms that post the lowest reading scores in the county. During the summer, B2U staff provide books and reading motivation to students where ever they happen to be – at a free lunch site, local park, or summer program. In FY12, over 30,000 students received B2U services.
- By partnering closely with the six largest school districts in the county, the library is able to ensure every student signs up for Summer Reading and starts tracking their reading as soon as summer begins. This year, over 100,000 babies, kids, and teens participated.
- Library staff serve over 30 S.U.N. School locations through afterschool programs including science investigation, cooking adventures, and arts and crafts exploration – always tying the experience back to materials available at the library.
- Throughout the summer, the library provides hundreds of arts and cultural programs throughout the county, offering thousands of families the opportunity to take classes, participate in the arts, and take in theatrical performances **free of charge.**

Libraries are an invaluable resource to kids no matter where they learn. We must restore and protect these services now!

**VOTE YES for libraries!**

*(This information furnished by Kristi Jo Lewis)*

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# MULTNOMAH COUNTY

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### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

#### Library Programs for Teens: a Safe Place and Help for their Future.

Our libraries provide access to learning resources and a safe place for teenagers to hang out after school. But the currently underfunded library system means that all branches are closed on Mondays, and close at five every day except Tuesday and Wednesday.

Creating a Library District by voting YES would restore hours and ensure that programs geared towards teens remain available.

Library programs and services for teens activate young people's participation in the community, promote good citizenship and further their education.

#### Volunteerism

The library trains and supports over 800 teens annually who volunteer for the library. Teens get their first volunteer experience by staffing the Summer Reading program, assisting with arts and cultural programs, or being a storytime helper. This opportunity provides teens with the experience of meeting deadlines, showing up on time, and learning how to function in a professional setting – all adding to their developmental assets.

#### Teen Council

Last year, library staff held 210 teen councils, connecting over 2,000 young adults with each other, library staff, and the community. Teen Councils plan programs, consult on policy, and influence library resources.

#### Teen Lounges

Teens have the opportunity to attend Teen Lounges – open space time for young adults to hang out, geek out, and mess around while feeling comfortable and welcome. Last year over 3,000 teens attended one of 443 Teen Lounges.

#### Educational Resources

Libraries help teens plan for the future through GED learning labs, access to ACT test preparation and information about financial aid, scholarships and how to apply for college.

Teens need a safe place to learn and prepare for the future.

We must protect these vital services and make them available to as many teens as possible.

We need the library to have stable funding.

**We can do that by voting YES for the Library District!**

*(This information furnished by Elizabeth Kaufman)*

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### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

#### Our libraries are here to help!

#### Vote YES to restore important library programs and protect them into the future.

Multnomah County Libraries provide free workshops and assistance to all of us – tax help, job interview training, computer basics, GED preparation, financial and retirement planning, and more.

The Library District will restore hours from 44 to 57 per week, making these programs available to more people. The District also stabilizes the library's funding, so programs like these will be funded into the future.

- **Tax Help** Trained tax preparers volunteer their time and expertise to help you with your taxes.
- **ACE that Job Interview!** Build your confidence by knowing which questions to expect and preparing to answer difficult questions.
- **Build an Effective Job Search Strategy** Three-part series to help improve your job search strategy, including creating a strong resume.
- **Dig Yourself out of Debt** How to get back on track with strategies addressing debt obligations effectively, knowing your legal rights, and learning how to manage debt issues in today's economic environment.
- **Protect Yourself from Scams** How to avoid phone and Internet scams. Provides information on types of scams, how to avoid scams, and what to do if you are scammed.
- **Email 101** Get started with the free web-based email service Gmail. Learn the very basics of sending/replying and features such as contacts, labels, chat, attachments, spam filters and more.
- **Ebooks & more 101** Covers the basics including set-up and downloading of electronic books. Learn which devices support library e-books and audiobooks.
- **Introduction to Computers (also in Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese)** In this fun, hands-on course, you will learn all the basic computer skills.
- **Citizenship Class** Learn the citizenship process. Study United States history and government and prepare for your citizenship interview.
- **Learning Labs: GED** Learn general information about GED testing requirements. Take a practice test, learn how to study online or with library study guides.

*(This information furnished by Elizabeth Beekley)*

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# MULTNOMAH COUNTY

## Measure 26-143

### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

#### **A Message from Former Library Advisory Board members: The Library District Makes Good Financial Sense**

We are former Library Advisory Board members and we served as volunteers reviewing library budgets, spending and financial practices for years. We've seen firsthand that the library is financially responsible.

However, the library's temporary funding structure goes through frequent periods of decline and uncertainty. This leads to cuts in hours open to the public, programs, services and activities.

A Library District will provide stable, dedicated and reliable funding so the library can continue to provide these important services into the future.

#### Our libraries are efficient:

- Every possible dollar goes into services for the public.
- The library routinely receives clean bills of financial health from the independently-elected auditor and is part of the annual county audit.
- To stretch dollars, the library has over 1800 volunteers to backup the librarians and staff – doing nearly 70,000 hours of work annually.

The proposal on the November ballot for a Library District gives the public the opportunity to vote to protect and preserve our libraries into the future:

- Creating a Library District would mean that all dollars collected would go only to library services, providing adequate funding for the future.
- The district does not create another layer of government because the County remains the governing body;
- At the top rate, the typical home pays \$49 more than they are currently paying for the libraries. However, less than that would be levied to start.
- The library district would continue to be part of the county's annual audit.

As former Advisory Board members, we believe the library's strong and accountable strong financial practices should be matched by a stable and dedicated financial structure.

The Library District will do just that. It's an investment our community should make.

**Terry McCall      Alice Meyer      Rick Gustafson**  
**Former Members, Multnomah County Library Advisory Board**

*(This information furnished by Lori Hardwick)*

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### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

#### **Libraries are critical to senior citizens in our community by providing continuing education and connection to others.**

Join the Oregon State Council for Retired Citizens in Voting YES for our Libraries!

As we age, we can always use a little help keeping up-to-date and connected to the world. Fortunately, we have a wonderful library system that provides so much for seniors.

Lack of stable funding means the library faces constant budget uncertainty.

#### A Library District would change that by providing dedicated and stable funding for our libraries into the future.

#### **Libraries help senior citizens plan for the future through educational and service programs like:**

- Scam protection workshops
- AARP Tax Help
- Debt and credit management classes
- Retirement planning
- Wills, trusts and estate planning

#### **Libraries help senior citizens learn new technology through classes and support like:**

- Introduction to Computers: all the basics
- Email 101
- Ebooks & more 101
- Library2Go: learn how to operate e-books and electronic devices
- TechnoHosts, real people help you develop your computer skills

#### **Libraries help senior citizens stay connected to the community with outreach programs like:**

- Page-turners large print book group--talk about books and get to know your neighbors
- Library Outreach Services (LOS) visits hundreds of retirement homes, assisted living facilities, and shelters bringing books, movies, music, magazines, puzzles and helping people choose books based on their interests
- Visiting Voices--volunteers read to groups in Alzheimer's and memory care units

Our libraries also deliver over 200,000 books each year to homebound senior citizens and others with barriers to visiting the library.

**These services help us to learn, stay active, and to live independently.**

**They are urgently needed by senior citizens in our community.**

**That's why we support the Library District. If you want to help support local senior citizens, please vote yes too!**

**Oregon State Council for Retired Citizens PAC**

*(This information furnished by Steve Weiss, Oregon State Council for Retired Citizens)*

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# MULTNOMAH COUNTY

## Measure 26-143

### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

**Small Businesses Benefit from Good Libraries.  
And, Good Libraries Help Make a Strong Economy.**

**Vote YES for a local Library District**

As business people, we support good libraries and we support the measure to create a local Library District.

**We all know libraries are great, but you might be surprised at how much small businesses rely on them:**

- Many libraries are located near small businesses, and library users are also customers of ours
- Libraries provide important services for small business people that are tailored to their needs: sources for researching products, locations, hiring, and more
- Libraries are anchors of neighborhoods and cities throughout Multnomah County. They attract families who are the heart and soul of our customer and employee base

So when libraries are closed, or are forced to cut programs because of our unstable system of temporary levies, it hurts us too.

**We use the libraries, we get direct economic benefit from our libraries, and we support restoring hours and providing stable funding into the future.**

There's one more thing to know: librarians run a tight ship. And the Library District will be no different:

- Nearly all library funding goes to front-line service for library users
- All funds collected for the district can go only to the library, not to other uses
- The library will continue to be part of the annual county audit, and will regularly be audited by the independently-elected auditor
- Three independent bodies review and oversee the library district budget

The Library District will replace the current system of temporary library funding. It will support our local libraries into the future. As business people, we need a predictable and stable environment in which to conduct our operations. Our libraries deserve no less.

Please join us in Voting Yes for our Libraries!

**Tony Fuentes,**  
Milagros Boutique

**Mark Doxtader,**  
Tastebud Farms

**Paula Markus,**  
Chop Butchery

**Cody Clark,**  
Café Delirium

**Stacey Wion,** Spielwerk Toys

*(This information furnished by Brian R Wilson)*

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### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

**Vote Yes for the Libraries!**

A Message from the Friends of the Library

We have a great opportunity to fix a big problem in our community—the funding of our amazing library system. The majority of the funding for our libraries currently comes from a levy that we must vote on every 3-5 years. The remaining financing comes from the County General Fund, which must be approved every year by the County Commissioners, and some from fees and grants to the library. The result is instability and uncertainty for the library budget.

Multnomah County Library is well-used and busier than ever. Our library is critically important to children learning to read, teens working on homework after school, seniors staying connected through book deliveries, and unemployed people looking for work who need help or free internet access.

There are many statistics to show our library's value and efficiency, the demographics and services, material circulation and programs provided. Our library consistently scores in the highest category in library ratings and studies.

More difficult to capture are the many stories of people using the library, every day:

- Like the homeless father that received help from library staff to research and apply for a job—and he was hired. Now, he is moving with his teenage son out of a shelter to an apartment.
- Or the many senior citizens who take library classes to learn about computers and navigating the internet in our increasingly digital world.
- Like the small children who attend storytime or their parents receiving recommendations for books that are tailored to their child's interests and reading level.

These stories and many more happen every day at our libraries. They show how the library is part of the core of our community.

**Measure 26-143 will restore hours and services.**

**Measure 26-143 will provide funding stability to protect our library for the future.**

**Vote YES for Our Libraries!**

**The Friends of the Multnomah County Library**

*(This information furnished by Craig Cedros, The Friends of the Multnomah County Library)*

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### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

**These days, our libraries are more important than ever!  
Parents across Multnomah County urge a YES vote for libraries**

Families have lots of concerns these days – keeping our jobs and health care coverage, raising children, and supporting our own parents as they age.

Fortunately, one big support for parents like us is our public library system.

Our libraries provide so much for local families:

- **Organized activities for kids**--storytimes, homework help, a safe place to go after school. Many of us use the libraries several times a week!
- **Use of computers for those who don't have them at home**, and classes for how to get started using them
- **Help from librarians with how to search for a new or better job**, how to research family history, how to learn a new language or travel to a new place
- **Books sent to senior citizens** and others with barriers to visiting the library-- over 200,000 a year!
- **Free help for everything**--how to teach our children to read, how to get a good mortgage, apply to college, or fix our car, and nearly anything else for which we need good, quick information!

Our libraries serve us well. Let's stand up for our libraries.

It's simple: A yes vote helps create a local Library District with stable and adequate future funding.

**We urge you to vote YES.**

Our libraries are currently underfunded. They're only open 44 hours a week – the shortest of any library system in the 4-county region. They are closed on Mondays. This means less programs, activities and services for families. Funds for new books have been reduced.

We need fully-funded libraries and we need to count on them into the future.

Please join us in voting YES for our libraries. Good libraries mean a great community and strong support for families.

**Devon Riley      Eric Kaster      Janis Adler**  
**Amy Watson, DC      Andrea Paluso      Cathy Sherick**  
**Beth and Danny Kapsch**

*(This information furnished by Janis Adler)*

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### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

**We believe that strong libraries build a strong community.  
Vote YES on Measure 26-143**

For nearly 150 years, Multnomah County Library has been an essential part of our community's health and well being. More than 34,000 people turn to our libraries every day.

But in spite of its reach and impact, our library faces financial uncertainty every year. The current system of temporary funding has left neighborhood libraries with reduced hours and cuts to programs and services.

Measure 26-143 will replace the current, flawed system of temporary funding with dedicated, stable funding for our library. Establishing a library district will ensure that:

- **Children, educators and families get the help they need**  
Last year, library programs were attended by nearly 250,000 children, parents and educators. Our library reaches out to every school in all 8 school districts in our county.
- **Seniors citizens stay connected and safe**  
Educational programs help seniors learn about their health, manage their finances safely and avoid the risks of identity theft. Library outreach services deliver more than 200,000 books a year to those who can't get to the library.
- **Job seekers have access to tools and information**  
The library is one of the few places where those who are without work can get help. Library staff and volunteers provide job search education, online application assistance, and help with resume writing and interviewing.
- **Local businesses succeed**  
Libraries help businesses thrive. They're critical to building healthy, vibrant neighborhoods.

Each year, our library breaks records and wins awards for high usage, efficient operations and programs that change the lives of children, families and seniors. Over the last decade, checkouts at our library have nearly doubled.

The Library Foundation is an independent, community-based non-profit dedicated to enhancing our library's incredible work. Our volunteers and thousands of supporters work to extend the taxpayer's investment in our hardworking library.

**Join us, the volunteers and supporters of The Library Foundation, by voting yes on Measure 26-143.**

*(This information furnished by Merris Sumrall, The Library Foundation)*

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# MULTNOMAH COUNTY

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### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

**As librarians, we know: in tough times libraries are especially important.**

As retired librarians and library workers, we've seen how libraries serve our community in good times and bad. But we have seen how people really depend on the libraries when they are struggling through tough economic times like these.

- Libraries provide job-seekers with ideas for leads, assistance with resume writing and interviewing
- Libraries provide a safe place for kids to go after school and library staff provide homework help
- Libraries deliver over 200,000 books to homebound senior citizens those experiencing barriers visiting the library
- Library computers are available for people who don't have one at home.

But because of the unstable temporary funding system libraries are also struggling – just when they are needed most.

**Our libraries have cut hours of service so now they're open only 44 hours a week** (10 years ago, the libraries were open up to 70 hours a week). That's the shortest weekly hours of any library in the four-county region.

Budgets for programs, activities, computer use, new books and materials are all reduced as well.

This is why we support a local library district – because it replaces temporary funding with stable, dedicated funding now and into the future. It will restore hours, programs, and services that people need – when they really need them.

**Please vote yes for our libraries.**

<b>Penny Hummel</b>	<b>June Mikkelson</b>	<b>Brandon Barnett</b>
<b>Cathy Camper</b>	<b>Ross Betzer</b>	<b>Percy Wise</b>
<b>Emily-Jane Dawson</b>	<b>Kim Anderson</b>	

*(This information furnished by Elizabeth Kaufman)*

The printing of this argument does not constitute an endorsement by Multnomah County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statements made in the argument.

### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

**Frequently Asked Questions  
About a Multnomah County Library District**

**Why do we need a Library District?**

The current system of temporary funding means our libraries constantly face uncertainty and we cut services, programs, hours, activities and budgets for books. The Library District provides dedicated funding for libraries into the future. It will restore what has recently been cut and provide stable funding moving forward. Money collected for the Library District could not be used for other programs.

**Does this create an additional layer of government?**

No. The Library District will be governed by the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners. There is no new layer of government; in fact the library may be able to cut its costs by becoming a District.

**Will a Library District be accountable?**

There are multiple accountability mechanisms for the District; the budget will be reviewed by the Library Advisory Board and by the County Board of Commissioners, the library will still be part of the county's annual audit. Also, The Multnomah County Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission would continue to review the annual budget. The District will periodically be audited by the independently-elected County Auditor.

**How much will this cost?**

The Library District would have a permanent rate that cannot change. That rate is limited to \$1.24 per \$1,000 assessed property value – although the rate will likely start lower at \$1.18. Currently, we pay \$.89 per \$1,000 for the reduced level of services. For the typical home, the district will cost \$49 more per year.

**What cuts will this measure restore?**

Right now, our libraries are open 44 hours per week, down from 57 a week. That's the lowest of any library in the four-county region. They aren't open seven days a week and are closed most evenings. Other cuts include programs, activities and the budget for new books and materials— exactly when more people want them.

**For more info, Visit [librariesyes.com/faq](http://librariesyes.com/faq)**

*(This information furnished by Michael Hanna)*

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# MULTNOMAH COUNTY

## Measure 26-143

### ARGUMENT IN OPPOSITION

#### Vote No on Measure 26-143

Historically, Multnomah County voters have been very generous toward the Library.

Over time they have approved property taxes to the extent that it has become one of the most expensive library systems in the country.

On a per resident basis, the **\$61-million-a-year Multnomah County Library costs more than double the national average.**

Measure 26-143 may look like a continuation of the levy process. It's not and that is why a prudent person would vote it down.

It would a big mistake to create a permanent taxing authority to a group of unelected government employees who will no longer have to answer to voters.

For more information & news on your taxes go to [OregonWatchdog.com](http://OregonWatchdog.com)

*(This information furnished by Don McIntire, Taxpayer Association of Oregon)*

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### ARGUMENT IN OPPOSITION

#### Statement in Opposition to Multnomah County Ballot Measure 26-143

The Multnomah County Library system offers valuable services to citizens, but there is no need to create a new library tax district. The library already receives generous tax support through voter-approved levies. According to Willamette Week (8/1/12), the library receives county funding of \$81.35 per capita, while the national average is \$38.95.

Despite this generous support, library service levels are actually low compared with peer cities. Last year, the Multnomah County library had a budget of \$61.9 million to pay for 18 branches, while Denver operated 22 branches for only \$30.9 million and Seattle ran 27 branches for \$50.4 million.

Library managers have been unable to contain the high cost of labor. In 2011, MCL spent an average of \$77,281 per full-time equivalent staff position. This went up to \$80,340 in 2012 and is \$81,432 for the current budget. Yet, when management felt that cuts needed to be made this year, they closed the libraries one day per week.

The current library tax levy rate is \$0.89 per \$1,000 in assessed value; under Measure 26-143 the new, permanent rate will jump to \$1.24 per \$1,000, costing the average homeowner \$49 per year in new taxes.

Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that actual library services would be maintained or improved with the new money. The library now receives \$14.9 million in general fund dollars from Multnomah County, and the County could easily transfer all of that money to other programs.

Indeed, as the Portland City Economist told the City Council on July 18, 2012, "Effectively, the majority of the increased taxes from a new library district will go to supplant funding from Multnomah County's General Fund, **not increase the library's budget.**"

The county library is already better funded than most urban libraries; there is no need for a new taxing district. Voters should Vote NO on Measure 26-143.

*(This information furnished by John A. Charles, Jr., Cascade Policy Institute)*

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