Dear,

I am writing to you as President of the Florida Association of College and Research Libraries (FACRL), which is the Florida state chapter of the American Library Association's (ALA) division of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL).

Multiple line item vetoes in Governor DeSantis' budget include eliminating ALL funding (over $29 million) for the Complete Florida Plus Program, a program that includes the Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative (FALSC), the Florida Virtual Campus (FLVC) and the Distance Learning and Student Services (DLSS) programs. This veto eliminates the budget for the university and college shared online catalog, discovery platforms, and more than $6.8 million for shared digital resources. These resources provide essential infrastructure for more 40 public colleges and university libraries statewide that serve over 1.3 million students, faculty, and staff.

In addition, $2 million in funding for our multitype library cooperatives (MLC) – TBLC, SEFLIN, NEFLIN, PLAN and SWFLN – was eliminated. The MLCs provide many services including the bulk of training and development for all Florida librarians and paraprofessionals.

This loss will impact the lives of ALL Floridians. Currently, there is no plan to restore state funding for any of these resources or services. The plan is to pass the costs of all FALSC/FLVC/DLSS services back onto the colleges and universities. Note that this is a time when budgets in higher education are already reduced due to the global pandemic – and the need for access to online library resources has never been more critical. The constituents who rely on the Complete Florida Plus Program’s services from FALSC/FLVC/DLSS, the value of these resources cannot be overstated as students, faculty, staff, and librarians will be working and learning primarily in virtual environments for the foreseeable future.

**What specifically is affected?**

For FALSC, the following resources/services are at risk:

* Integrated Library System and search/discovery tools for all 40 institutions, including shared union catalog, UBorrow ILL system, etc.
* State-funded electronic resources collection
* Authentication platforms (EZProxy and OpenAthens) for remote online access to all e-resources
* Help Desk Services for all FALSC/FLVC/DLSS services
* Digital archives from many institutions housed in FL-Islandora digital repository
* Staff with unmatched experience and knowledge in all of the above!

**What will this mean for library operations and patrons?**

* **Integrated Library System:** (inventory control, circulation, acquisitions, cataloging)

Without the ILS, libraries will lose:

* + Their inventory management system.
  + The ability to lend print items and receive returns of print items in circulation (won’t be able to identify items that have been charged out and who has them)
  + The ability to manage patron data
  + Unmediated borrowing of materials from other university libraries
  + Course reserves system (inability to put material on hold for use during courses to ensure access for all students when materials might be hard to find)

Thus, a new system would need to purchased, implemented, and each of the 40 institutions would have to redesign its workflows and processes. This process would take nine to twelve months and cost millions of dollars for each college/university.

* **Mango** (discovery service, catalog interface, patron empowerment, UBorrow) – all FSC and SUS libraries use this
  + Loss of the statewide discovery tool (<https://union.discover.flvc.org/ux.jsp>)
  + Users would not be able to place holds, view their accounts or view reserves list.
  + Users would not be able to search the holdings of other 39 institutions or place holds on those materials (UBorrow)
  + Permalinks in syllabi, research papers, or other webpages would no longer function.
  + Users would lose access to tools like “folders”, "emails”, "text to phone,” etc.
* **OneSearch** (discovery service: EDS, Find It @ FSU, Journal Search, Curriculum Builder) – most SUS libraries use this
  + Users would have no way of finding Library provided and free materials.
  + There would be no way to look up journal coverage or find articles via citations.
  + Loss of OpenURL “Find it @” functionality means no ability to access an article across different platforms.
  + Loss of Curriculum Builder tool equals loss of LTI-integrated service within online learning management systems at each college and university that allows instructors to build and manage reading lists within course sites.
* **ILS Migration/Implementation**
  + Current library system is over 18 years old and no longer being updated; current contract with vendor and process for migrating the SUS and FCS to a next generation library system would be on hold and very difficult to recreate.
  + Inability to prepare the existing system's data for migration into a next generation library system.
* **Reporting** (Arrow, SQL specialized reports)
  + Losing access to Aleph means no reports can be run in that system.  In addition to reports in Aleph itself, FALSC creates and maintains coding for additional reports which help with the following:
    - Reports needed for internal work (record clean-up projects, fund reports for budget tracking, collection management i.e. withdraws and re-designations)
    - Reports for external reporting (ARL annual stats, ASERL stats, IPEDS, SACS/COC and program accreditation reports)
* **Electronic resources licensed and paid by FLVC**
  + (These are calendar-year licenses, so lost access would start 01/21) – Off-campus access would be lost sooner when Authentication Platforms are lost.
  + Loss of access to licensed electronic resources (journals, books, etc.) required not just for research and learning functions of the university but also program accreditation.
  + Shared collection budget for FCS and SUS holdings amounted to $6,853,316 for 2020.
* **Group licensing for electronic resources**: FLVC negotiates and licenses electronic resources which are funded from institutional budgets
  + FALSC negotiates group discounts and consortia savings for large packages of electronic resources (journals and books)
  + Lack of viable consortia bargaining power to replace it; costs will go up substantially on many of the products
* **Digital Collections** 
  + FL Islandora platform which hosts digital collections for 11 colleges and 6 universities, including theses and dissertations and Florida cultural heritage collections
* **PURL** (Persistent URLs used in Diginole, ArchivesSpace, Aleph, and Mango)
  + Citations referencing digital collections and finding aids using PURLs will result in dead links, negatively impacting the researchers’ abilities to effectively locate resources and evaluate research findings.
* **Open Journal Systems** - Journal publishing platform
  + 37k+ articles across ~35 journals statewide - all content that is unique and not available elsewhere
  + <https://falsc.libguides.com/FloridaOnlineJournals/statistics>
  + All articles are open access and available for free to citizens/public
* **Consortia licensing and services would be lost, including:**
  + ArchivesSpace (collections management)
  + OCLC services (global discovery)
  + Open Textbook network
  + DLLI Courier services that delivers books between Florida libraries
  + Rapid ILL (interlibrary loan)

Thank you for your consideration of this letter. As President of the FACRL Board, the I urge you to share this letter with any individuals or entities who may be able to help mitigate this crisis that, as it currently stands, will eliminate or dramatically reduce access to resources that now more than ever are fundamental to the education and information of students, faculty, and all citizens of Florida. I, and other members of the board, am available to discuss these concerns at any time.

Our libraries are asking you now to prioritize legislation and state-level actions to consistently fund and maintain library services in higher education. Taking emergency action is important, but we need advocates for public higher education and libraries to know how badly we need them and why. We call on you to immediately investigate this massive loss to public higher education and to advocate for correcting this decision.

Sincerely,

Alyssa Koclanes

President

Florida Chapter of the Association of College and Research Libraries (FACRL)