***TEMPLATE for Letter to Legislators: HB 2243***

Dear *YOUR SENATOR OR REPRESENTATIVE NAME HERE*,

My name is *YOUR NAME HERE* and, as your constituent and a member/an ally *CHOOSE ONE* of the Oregon Library Association, (*OPTIONAL:* and a library employee at *YOUR LIBRARY NAME HERE)*, I am asking for your support of Oregon public libraries. In particular, I call your attention to **HB 2243, a bill to update the current statutory definition of “Public Library” which was last revised in 1975.**

Forty-five years ago, public libraries primarily functioned as book repositories and offered little in the way of early literacy services, adult programming, or community outreach. Contemporary libraries do all this and more. Updating the definition today is needed to keep up with **changing models of library services**; to **establish minimum standards** for all public libraries receiving state funds; and to **align Oregon’s definition of “Public Library”** with those from other states.

All Oregonians deserve excellent public library services. HB 2243 would ensure this by amending the definition of “Public Library”to reflect **“free and equal access to library and information services for all residents,”** and by directing the State Library Board to **establish minimum standards for the formation and maintenance of Oregon’s public libraries.**

**Standards are critical because they provide a baseline from which libraries can be measured.** Minimum standards help stakeholders identify strategic planning goals, provide guidelines for transparency and budget analysis, and **safeguard responsible management of resources entrusted under state law**. Many states have statutory criteria for public libraries to make certain *all* communities, rural and urban, receive equitable library services. Oregonians ought to do the same. **With an updated definition of “Public Library,” all residents will be able to walk into any public library in Oregon and be confident it meets state standards and provides quality services.**

Thank you for your time and your support of Oregon’s libraries.

Regards,

*YOUR NAME HERE*