

Colorado's Low Ranking on State Funding for Public Libraries Plummets Further

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Spending on Library Collections Reduced by Almost 10 Percent from 2002 to 2003



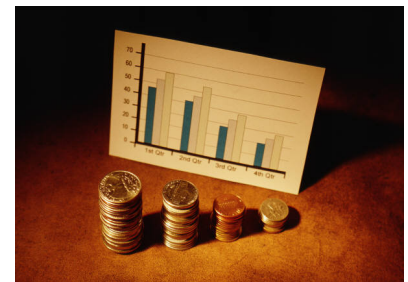
In 2003, Colorado—at five cents per capita—ranked 46th among the 50 states on state revenue to support public libraries. The only states that spent less than Colorado were Wyoming, New Hampshire, Vermont, and South Dakota, with three, two, one, and zero cents per capita, respectively. In 2002, Colorado spent 51 cents per capita, ranking 34th. That low ranking was no reason for pride, except that it put Colorado ahead of an additional dozen states.

The top ten states for state revenue per capita for public libraries are: Ohio (\$39.87), Hawaii (\$18.92), Pennsylvania (\$6.60), Rhode Island (\$6.35), Maryland (\$5.06), West Virginia (\$4.77), Georgia (\$3.80), Delaware (\$3.21), Indiana (\$2.94), and Illinois (\$2.76).



That interval, from 2002 to 2003, was when Colorado libraries lost the \$2 million State Funding for Libraries grant program. Those grants were earmarked entirely for library collections. Their loss lowered spending on books and other materials from \$6.09 to \$5.65 per capita. In fact, by the most conservative estimate (based on the Consumer Price Index), inflation cut the spending power of that \$5.65 to \$5.52—in effect, a cut to collection buying power of more than 60 cents per capita. That represents a drop of 9.4 percent in per capita spending on library books and other materials.

For perspective, 32 out of 50 states provide 50 cents per capita or more for public libraries, and half of all states allot a dollar or more per capita for libraries.



SOURCE: LRS.org (the Library Research Service website), Public Libraries, National Statistics,
http://www.lrs.org/asp_public/national.asp

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Fast Facts – Recent Statistics from the Library Research Service

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