**Save the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library (WTBBL)**

**Current budget request:**

The Office of the Secretary of state requested $6.7 million from the General Fund in the 2025-2027 biennium to sustain state-funded operations at the Washington State Library (Fund 14E). The Washington Talking Book and Braille Library is a part of the Washington State Library. This funding is critical to offset declining document recording fee revenue, which directly supports library operations. The House and Senate have adopted their budgets. The amounts adopted are different but fall far short of what WTBBL needs to continue current levels of operation. Legislators are now negotiating a final budget.

**Who is served by the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library?**

* An increasing number of older people experiencing vision loss, veterans, children and people living in rural areas for which it is a critical resource
* Serving approximately patrons of all ages
* blind, low vision, Deaf/Blind, individuals who have a reading disability and patrons with physical disabilities that make holding a book or turning a page difficult

**What does the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library offer?**

* Free access to information and reading material in alternate formats through the US Postal Service or through a downloadable app
* Provides books and magazines in audio and braille and large print for young children and youth.
* Offers access to families and schools, early literacy programs, braille literacy programs, technology and assistive technology training for all ages
* Local production of books in audio and braille.
* Accessible information including the Washington State Voters’ Pamphlet in audio and electronic formats
* Programming including low vision resources and collaborative, educational youth programs
* Reader’s advisors and reference material

The library is a critical resource for the increasing number of older people experiencing vision loss, students of all ages and people living in rural areas.

**Without an increase in their budget allocation or full funding of their request**, **WTBBL services will be cut back and most likely result in:**

* staff layoffs
* potential closure to the public
* require appointment only access
* reduction in phone hours
* limited access to readers’ advisors
* limited assistance with technology and download support
* reduction in the production of local braille and audio books
* potential slowdown in the speed of circulation of library materials.

**This document was prepared jointly by the National Federation of the Blind of Washington and the Washington Council of the Blind**

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