



## CHIEF OFFICERS OF STATE LIBRARY AGENCIES

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### COSLA Endorses Summer Meals and Learning Act of 2022

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Research has demonstrated, over and over again, the challenges to academic achievement for low-income children. Summer is often a critical time when learning is lost, leaving students unprepared to enter the next grade ready to learn. The proposed Summer Meals and Learning Act of 2022 (S. 2070 – Merkley/Morelle and H.R. 3667 - Katko) provides for a new U.S. Department of Education federal grant program that addresses this problem.

The Act would provide support to State Library Agencies to fund summer reading programs in school libraries all across the country. Targeting students who read below grade-level, eligible schools will also offer a summer lunch program and have at least 50% of students reading below grade level. Targeted federal funding will open school libraries during the summer, helping to reduce the summer learning slide. This plan unites the natural partners of summer meal and summer reading programs to help students thrive year-round. The Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) is pleased to support this creative solution to a very real need in communities across the United States, while also acknowledging that there have been reductions in the number of school librarians over the last several years that could make implementation challenging in some places.

COSLA recognizes the critical role that school libraries with qualified school librarians can play in combating summer learning loss and hunger “State library agencies are well positioned within each state’s education infrastructure to connect summer reading and summer meals programs. Reaching students where they are during summer months, and connecting them with ongoing educational resources to continue their school-year learning is a simple and effective strategy” observed COSLA Board President, and Montana State Librarian Jennie Stapp.

Building on a model successfully piloted in Oregon, COSLA is optimistic this important bill will advance and further the important goal of bringing additional learning resources to our nation’s most vulnerable students during the summer months.” offered COSLA Executive Director Jeremy Johannesen.

A [one page synopsis of the Summer Meals and Learning Act](#) is available [HERE](#).

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### About COSLA

The Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA), an independent organization of the principal library officials in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and two territories, responsible for statewide library development. Its purpose is to provide leadership on issues of common concern and national interest; to further state library agency relationships with federal government and national organizations; and to initiate cooperative action for the improvement of library services to the people of the United States.

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