

ADMINISTRATOR'S STATEMENT
82nd Regular Session, Agency Submission, Version 1
Automated Budget and Evaluation System of Texas (ABEST)

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Agency code: **306** Agency name: **Library & Archives Commission**

Commission Chairman's Statement

Our commission is fully supportive of the State's goal to seek new and innovative ways to meet our priorities in a fiscally responsible manner. We have a track record of being highly effective in meeting our responsibilities and adapting to challenges and change.

We embrace the opportunity to maintain a system for long term management and preservation of the vital and enduring state government records. However, as information technology and data have exploded, we are increasingly limited in our ability to meet the needs of our client state agencies and other customers because of the shortage of trained staff and tools. Inadequate physical and electronic storage impacts our service and efficiency.

It is our aim to be accountable, safeguard the state's resources and provide excellence in all our areas of service.

Sandra J. Pickett, Chairman

Texas State Library and Archives Commission Members and terms of office

Sandra J. Pickett, Liberty	2009-15
Sharon T. Carr, El Paso	2006-11
Martha Doty Freeman, Austin	2009-15
Larry G. Holt, Bryan	2009-15
Scott McAfee, Driftwood	2007-13
Sally Reynolds, Rockport	2006-11
Michael C. Waters, Dallas	2007-13

Administrator's Statement

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission began its second century of service to Texas this year with a renewal of our commitment to uphold our mission of safeguarding and providing access to significant historical resources, offering information services that inspire and support research, education and reading, and enhancing the capacity for achievement of current and future generations.

The agency celebrated its 100th birthday on the Capitol steps March 19, 2009, the anniversary of the date Gov. Thomas Campbell signed a bill that creating the Texas State Library and Historical Commission. We ended our centennial year by being named a national Literary Landmark in a ceremony at which First Lady Laura Bush lauded the agency's achievements.

It was fitting that our 101st year of service to Texas started with the completion of a \$20-million, two-year renovation of our flagship building, the Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives and Library. By the end of May, 65 displaced staff and thousands of cubic feet of archives and library materials returned to the Zavala building. Staff are settling in to new workspaces, and all three public service areas have reopened for business. The renovated building now has upgraded infrastructure, enhanced workspaces for the public and staff, a Conservation Center, movable shelving for specialized archival and library materials, an enhanced security system, and modern environmental controls to protect permanently valuable historical records. The commission is planning a fall rededication ceremony for the building.

TSLAC's State Records Center is also undergoing major deferred maintenance that will correct longstanding structural and infrastructure problems and bring the building up to codes. Also, the agency's Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center outside Liberty installed movable shelving in 2010 funded by the 81st Legislature to

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increase storage capacity for local government archives in the 10-county southeast Texas area.

These upgrades will increase the commission's capacity to properly care for materials entrusted to us; offer learning experiences that promote interest in Texas history, books, reading, authors, libraries and literacy; support the needs of beginner and advanced researchers; and secure the future of our state's documentary heritage.

Significant Challenges

Despite generous support from the Texas Legislature and private donors, TSLAC could not expand the Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives and Library building to accommodate growing archival collections. In fact, more than 22,000 cubic feet of archives are stored at the State Records Center, a facility neither designed nor intended for storing permanent archives. Movable shelving installed in the seven storage, or stack, levels at the Zavala building helped alleviate crowding; however, weight-bearing posts prevented the installation of the intended number of shelves, thus limiting growth capacity to less than five years.

The current economic downturn has had a profound impact on libraries, particularly public libraries. Though annual visits to Texas public libraries have increased by 7% to just under 79 million, operating expenditures are flat (0% growth) compared to the previous year. Because budgets are stagnant but personnel costs continue to increase modestly, expenditures for books and other library materials declined 6%, after years of steady growth. Public libraries are loaning more materials than ever, with circulation up 6% to more than 116 million items, and circulation of children's materials is up a whopping 15% to more than 43 million items.

But public libraries are so much more than books. Almost 5 million people attended programs on a wide range of topics at public libraries last year. A national study found 67% of public libraries reported they were the only source of free computer and Internet access in their communities; that increases to 73% in our state's rural areas. As government at all levels conducts more transactions with citizens online, those without computer and Internet access are disadvantaged and limited in their ability to participate in civic life. With more employers using the Internet to advertise jobs and accept applications, those without access lose opportunities.

Where job-seeking skills and workplace preparation are concerned, public libraries are playing increasingly valuable roles. Libraries provide classes and individualized assistance with computers, software applications, database searching, information retrieval, resume writing, job searching, mastering interview skills, and e-government services.

As library budgets at Texas colleges, universities, public schools and public and medical libraries shrink, reliance on access to high-quality online information from TSLAC-licensed databases for TexShare, the state's nationally renowned library consortium, grows. For more than 20 years TexShare has been dedicated to two priorities: ensuring excellence in education and saving libraries money by leveraging the state's consolidated buying power. As enrollment increases, particularly at the state's community colleges, more pressure will be placed on libraries in institutions of higher education to maintain and increase online learning resources to support expanding student populations with varying information literacy skills and learning styles.

As the agency's Talking Book Program transitions to the new digital content model for its 20,000-plus blind or physically disabled service recipients, it must contend with a legacy computer system that was state-of-the-art when it was developed more than 20 years ago, but now needs significant upgrades to extend its life. The automated system manages inventory in all formats (Braille, large print, audiocassette and digital), maintains patrons' reading histories, creates selection lists for hundreds of materials mailed each day and handles other highly complex tasks critical to achieving service excellence.

State agencies and local governments depend on the State and Local Records Management Division to provide consulting assistance and training for effective and

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efficient management of government records in their care. Today most of those records are paper; however, an increasing number of government entities are requesting guidance in maintaining digital records. In addition, the Archives and Information Services Division is not capable of storing and preserving government records that must be kept in perpetuity as vital historical resources. Both divisions are jointly planning for the anticipated growth of electronic government and archival records that will need to be maintained for appropriate periods of time.

Exceptional Item Requests - These challenges are reflected in the five Exceptional Item Requests that TSLAC has included in its 2012-2013 Legislative Appropriations Request, arranged and discussed in priority order.

Preserve and Protect Texas State Archives

Our highest priority is increasing proper storage capacity for the state's irreplaceable historical documents. The recently completed Zavala building renovation provided only limited additional storage capacity for archives; however, the agency currently has 22,000 cubic feet of archival records stored at the State Records Center. With that center near capacity, storage of archival records deprives the State and Local Records Management Division of much-needed revenue capacity. Some state agencies have been waiting for Zavala building renovations to end before sending their archival records to TSLAC. The commission predicts that these records would rapidly fill the space intended for future growth.

A staff architect with the Texas Facilities Commission prepared a project analysis of archival storage options in January 2009 and updated budget calculations recently. Nationally-acclaimed government archives and records management expert Dr. Greg Hunter also assessed the agency's archival storage needs in 2009. Based on these analyses, TSLAC requests \$26,383,000 in General Obligation Bond funding in FY2012, along with debt service of \$180,822 in FY2012 and \$1,238,438 in FY2013.

Talking Book Program Computer Upgrade

Since 1931 TSLAC has partnered with the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in the Library of Congress to bring books in alternative formats to blind or disabled Texans who cannot read standard print. The Talking Book Program serves more than 20,000 people who frequently characterize it as a "lifeline." The computer system supporting all Talking Book Program transactions is 20+ years old; the operating system and the application itself require upgrades in order to remain fully functional. The agency also wishes to plan the transition to a system based on open-source software and open standards. TSLAC will require consulting assistance since the needs of this system are highly complex and we do not have staff who can handle the specialized nature of such a transition. This system is a critically important component of the service – it undergirds all operations. TSLAC requests a total of \$300,000 to improve and maintain the viability of this mission-critical resource.

E-Records and E-Archives Program

In July the State Auditor's Office released an audit that recommended the agency "study options for increased electronic record storage for noncurrent, infrequently used hard-copy records." A 2009 study of TSLAC's archival storage needs urged the agency to establish a digital preservation program for Texas archives. More and more state agencies are turning to the commission's Archives & Information Services and State & Local Records Management Divisions for guidance and assistance in managing electronic records (e-Records) and electronic archives (e-Archives) created during the conduct of state business. Currently TSLAC does not have any capacity to store digital records.

Data recently released by the Department of Information Resources demonstrate that information management practices of Texas state agencies are anything but consistent. When asked if the process of archiving and purging data from information systems was coordinated with records management staff, 35% of respondents answered "No." Most state agencies give staff freedom to create folders and name files on agency networks without benefit of document, content, or information management systems or, in fact, any standards at all. Even factors governing an agency's retention of back-up media vary depending on whether information technology

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practice or records retention schedules predominate at the time decisions are made. Clearly there is a critical need for Records Management Officers, Information Resource Managers, and Archivists to receive advice and training on the best ways to manage electronic records created in the conduct of state business and, further, to manage those few electronic records that meet the criteria established for archives that must be kept permanently.

The agency wishes to plan such a program and requests funding to be used as a match for a federal grant that will assist in planning, developing, and implementing a successful e-Records and e-Archives program and hiring personnel with specialized knowledge and skills. We request \$199,700 in FY12 and \$286,600 in FY13.

Maintain and Expand TexShare Online Information

The TexShare Resource Sharing Consortium was established in 1988 by public universities and today includes 694 college, university, public, and medical libraries. By using the state's buying power, TSLAC can license authoritative, credible, reliable online information for use by students, faculty and the general public. TexShare currently makes 50 databases available, and use of these important resources continues to grow. To date in FY2010, more than 61 million searches have been conducted and 37.6 million documents downloaded. Through shrewd negotiating, staff have held the line on license increases; however, as database vendors respond to financial pressures from publishers, cost increases are inevitable just to maintain the current databases.

Requested funds would also allow continued access to 39 databases by public school students in more than 1,100 Texas school districts. In FY2008 TSLAC began offering access to state-supported online information resources to students and teachers through public school libraries. These resources make a critically important contribution to learning and arm students with information literacy skills that will improve their prospects in higher education and the workforce. The 80th Legislature appropriated \$2.5 million from the Texas Education Agency's Technology Allotment for each year of the FY2008-2009 biennium to pay for public school databases, and the 81st Legislature continued this funding. Now every public school student and teacher has access to authoritative, credible, reliable online information. In the 2009-2010 school year, almost 51 million searches were conducted and 7.4 million documents downloaded.

TSLAC wishes to add databases in response to an expressed need for workforce information and training. As the unemployment rate has increased, growing numbers of Texans use computers in public libraries to search and apply for jobs, improve computer skills, develop resumes, and engage in other job-related activities. These valuable resources also would help Texans prepare for certification and license exams; learn computer programs required by many employers; improve math, reading, and writing proficiency; attain higher scores on college admissions tests; practice for the GED; and provide job search guidance and tools.

TSLAC requests \$4,012,000 for the biennium to maintain the current online databases for TexShare members and school districts and to license workforce development and job skills training databases.

Loan Star Libraries Grants to Texas Public Libraries

Texas public libraries are supported mainly by local funding. In FY2009 total operating expenditures for the 561 Texas public libraries were \$445.8 million, 98% of which came from local funds. Total operating expenditures per capita for Texas public libraries rank us 48th in the country with an average per capita expenditure about half of the national average. (Texas per capita is \$19.68; U. S. per capita is \$36.36.)

In the current biennium, TSLAC had to cut Loan Star Libraries grants by \$1.4 million to comply with the directive to cut 5% from the agency's budget. This reduced the amount of grants the commission could fund at a time when local revenues are declining. Meanwhile, more people than ever are visiting public libraries, including many unemployed or underemployed individuals who seek help to find and apply for jobs.

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Loan Star Libraries grants are used for operating expenditures that meet local needs as determined in community analyses and long-range planning processes. These are as varied as the communities of Texas, and include such elements as preschool, family, and adult literacy programs; English tutoring; elderly and homebound services; afterschool programs for children and teens; children's summer reading programs; expanded collections of books and other materials to meet varied and growing needs; space for public forums and civic meetings; and other programs and services that improve the quality of life in communities across our state.

Public libraries are assets that support strong communities. Additional state resources will enable them to increase their impact locally and statewide. TSLAC requests \$4 million over the 2012-2013 biennium for the Loan Star Libraries program. This Exceptional Item Request would restore the \$1.4 million reduction in the current biennium and grow the program to help our state's public libraries at a time when their communities are relying on them more than ever.

Approach to 10% Reduction and its Impact

TSLAC's 10% reduction target is \$3.95 million. The impact of previous budget reductions, including the 5% reduction in 2010-2011 and the loss of 18.5 FTEs over the past decade, limits the agency's budget-cutting options. A large portion of the commission's budget is also grant funds distributed by formula to individual libraries to improve services or support statewide programs that benefit all libraries. We also had to be mindful of the impact a budget reduction would have on the ability of Texas to realize required maintenance of effort funding for federal Library Services and Technology Act funds of about \$11 million per year in the 2012-2013 biennium.

Our Executive Office, Talking Book Program, and Archives & Information Services Division have been cut to the bone. Thus, layoffs are targeted in these areas. The State & Local Records Management Division services are largely fee-based. As state agency budgets have been reduced, we already see a reduction in requests for records storage and imaging services, and we anticipate more revenue declines in 2012 and 2013. At least one staff layoff would be targeted in this division.

We were the first agency to have its servers moved to the Austin Data Center in 2007, requiring us to relinquish 4 positions while our costs escalated. Therefore, we could not look to our Information Resources Technologies Division for any reductions. That left our two largest programs, Loan Star Libraries and TexShare, administered by the Library Development and the Library Resource Sharing Divisions, respectively, as targets. Reductions in the budget for the Loan Star Libraries Program would reduce resources available to the state's public libraries at a time when significantly greater numbers of people are relying on them and when local communities can least afford to increase support. In addition, reductions in this program would endanger the receipt of a sizable amount of federal grant funds to which Texas is entitled.

Reductions in TexShare would impact students and faculty in higher education institutions as well as students and teachers in the public schools. By licensing online information resources statewide, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission saves individual institutions and libraries millions of dollars at a time when their budgets can least absorb another financial obligation.

Conclusion

Without a restoration of the General Revenue appropriations that would allow TSLAC to reach the required maintenance of effort level (about \$600,000), Texas would lose about \$3.4 million in federal funds in 2012 to 2014 if the full 10% reduction is made in 2012 and 2013.

We look forward to working with the 82nd Texas Legislature and the Governor's office to arrive at an appropriation for the Texas State Library and Archives Commission that fully recognizes the agency's many and varied customers, the complexity of its mission and goals and its outstanding record of service to the people of Texas.

Peggy D. Rudd, Director and Librarian