

cc: BOS

1/27/03
#5

Acton Memorial Library

**486 Main Street
Acton, MA 01720
(978) 264-9641/9642
TDD 635-0072**

January 22, 2003

Board of Selectmen and
Mr. Don Johnson, Town Manager
Town Hall, Acton, MA

Members of the Board and Mr. Johnson,

As you make final decisions for the FY03 budget, we respectfully remind you of the following:

Reductions in the library's budget that are disproportionately greater than other town departments will have profound effects on the town's citizens and students. It will initially mean a loss of certification by the Board of Library Commissioners. Loss of certification means a certain loss of state funds, cessation of interlibrary loan privileges and loss of grant eligibility for both the Acton Memorial Library and the West Acton Citizens Library. Most importantly, it will prohibit Acton residents from borrowing materials at other public libraries.

Present budget-related requirements for state aid compliance are:

- a) appropriate \$747,782 for public library services in FY04;
- b) provide 50 hours of library service a week;
- c) spend at least 15% of library budgets on books and periodicals.

Libraries become more important during economic downturns because they provide valuable resources for unemployed residents to acquire new skills, research employment opportunities, learn about different career fields and to partake in the recreational and cultural resources the library offers.

Our students' need of library services will increase enormously if the School Department eliminates most of their library staff from their budget. Students seeking to fill the void left by the staff cuts will have to rely on the town's library facilities and personnel to acquire their research skills and to obtain assistance in completing their research projects. A loss of school libraries are certain to make students more dependent than ever upon public library services and resources.

Acton's library is one of the few town departments that serves people of all ages,

abilities and interests. Usage is at an all time high. In 2002, this library loaned over 410,000 items and more than 225,000 people came through its doors.

If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,



David T. Barrat, President
Acton Memorial Library
Board of Trustees

DTB:

cc: Marcia Rich
Library Director