



### **Tribute Resolution Honoring Irene Padilla**

**Whereas**, Maryland State Librarian and Chief Operating Officer Irene Padilla will retire effective June 30, 2024.

**Whereas**, Irene Padilla has a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in English Literature and Library Science and a Master of Library Science (MLS) from Western Michigan University. She also holds a Master's in Public Administration (MPA) from George Mason University.

**Whereas**, Irene Padilla has worked in libraries in Virginia and Michigan as a school librarian, corporate archivist, regional library projects manager, and as a public library administrator.

**Whereas**, Irene Padilla served as deputy director and director of the Harford County Public Library in Maryland from April 1990 through June 2002. In that capacity, she led the system through a period of rapid growth. She developed and managed an annual budget of \$10.6 million, plus a capital improvement budget of \$10.5 million.

**Whereas**, Irene Padilla has led the Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA) since 2002 and has overseen the administration of state and federal programs to improve library services in the 24 public library systems in the State of Maryland, the State Library Resource Center (SLRC), and the SAILOR broadband and Regional Resource Center programs.

**Whereas**, Irene Padilla has overseen the Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (LBPD) and the Maryland Deaf Culture Digital Library.

**Whereas**, Irene Padilla has provided leadership for library services in Maryland, coordinated development and implementation of Maryland's Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) five-year plan, and served as an advocate for all types of libraries and their contributions to literacy, information acquisition, and lifelong learning.

**Whereas**, Irene Padilla's vision of providing leadership and guidance for the development of collaborations across multi-type libraries has helped develop dialogue and partnerships within the library community to sharpen and prioritize shared challenges, increase the potential for expanded resource sharing and to build the case for supporting Maryland libraries. Ms. Padilla has strongly supported libraries' roles in promoting intellectual freedom through an impartial environment where individuals and their interests and inquiries are brought together with ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions.



**Whereas**, over the past two decades, Irene Padilla oversaw many changes in library service across the state as they moved to enhanced digital collections and became integral to providing digital equity through public access computers, lendable computers, and Wi-Fi hotspots, as well as Wi-Fi extenders on building and mobile libraries, to ensure the provision of key library services beyond the library's physical locations.

**Whereas**, Irene Padilla successfully established the Maryland State Library Agency as an independent unit of State government under the direction of the 12-member Maryland State Library Board following historic legislation passed unanimously in April 2017 by the Maryland General Assembly. This placed the State Library on an equal footing with K-12 and higher education and gave public libraries a distinct identity within the Education Article. She oversaw the transition of executive direction, policy development, and organizational structure from the Maryland State Department of Education.

**Whereas**, with the passage of SB 419, a minimum State funding amount was established for the Maryland Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (LBPD), beginning in fiscal 2016, allowing for the reorganization of this service to include 10 additional state funded positions. The additional personnel enhanced the Maryland Accessible Textbook Program, Youth Services, the Adaptive Technology Education Program, the Digital Recording Studio, Facilities Maintenance and technical services.

**Whereas**, Irene Padilla facilitated an increase in revenue for the financially struggling Maryland Library Association (MLA). She provided skilled leadership to support all types of libraries in the State, contributing to the development of MLA into the strong, professional organization it is today. She hired a new MLA Executive Director who worked with Irene to promote advocacy and partnerships.

**Whereas**, Irene Padilla's other accomplishments have included the development of a statewide library card and, in order to meet customers' needs where they live, work, and play, the award of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to support the purchase of 14 mobile library vehicles for libraries across the state, including bookmobiles, specialized service vehicles for job seekers, and vans to provide neighborhood services.

**Whereas**, Irene Padilla's retirement caps a long and distinguished career of almost 50 years, including nearly 22 years of service to the State of Maryland, which included serving as President of the Maryland Library Association from 1998-1999.

**Whereas**, Irene Padilla's unwavering support for Maryland libraries has earned the deep respect of her colleagues and those fortunate enough to know and work with her;



**Resolved**, that the American Library Association, on behalf of its members,

1. recognizes Irene Padilla's achievements and distinguished 50-year career as a respected library innovator, leader, and mentor;
2. expresses its appreciation and gratitude for these contributions and wishes her well in the years to come; and
3. sends a letter acknowledging her work and contributions to the Chair of the Maryland State Library Board.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association  
Sunday, January 21, 2024, ALA LLX, Baltimore, MD

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leslie Burger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Leslie Burger, Interim ALA Executive  
Director, and Secretary of the ALA  
Council