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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Montana State Library Commission to Meet

(HELENA) --- The Montana State Library Commission will meet on Wednesday, June 14 at 9:00 a.m. in the Montana State Library Grizzly Conference Room in Helena.

Agenda items of significance include the approval of annual Montana Library Federation Plans of Service for fiscal year 18 and adoption of the Library's five-year Library Services Technology Act plan required by the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services. The agenda and meeting materials are available online at:

https://mslservices.mt.gov/About_the_Library/Commission_Councils/Commission/comm_MeetingMaterials.aspx.

Additionally, the Commission will finalize plans to address known, and anticipated, budget cuts that go into effect beginning July 1. House Bill 2, the State Budget bill, mandates a reduction of \$309,000 from the State Library budget. Under Senate Bill 261, if certain revenue "triggers" are met, the funding is reduced by an additional \$681,000, for a total reduction of about \$990,000 in state funding. Overall, the State Library's Fiscal Year 2017 budget is about \$6 million.

The Commission heard public comments about draft proposals to address the budget cuts at a public hearing on June 6. The proposals, which are available online, include plans to close the library's large reading room, merge the Talking Book Library with the Digital Library, cut the contract for the Montana Natural Heritage Program by 25 percent, and cut 50 percent of the general fund budget to support technology for Montana libraries. These cuts would have broad implications across the agency for staff as the library stands to lose 12 positions including GIS analysts, librarians and administrative and information technology staff. Loss of staff will mean that the State Library will be less equipped to manage and provide access to information about Montana State Government, information about Montana's natural resources and geographic information. Finally, the library would have fewer staff to serve Montanans who cannot read traditional print material.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting in person or online. Members of the public who wish to join the virtual meeting should contact Marlys Stark at 406-444-3384 by 5 p.m. on Monday, June 12, 2017.

The Montana State Library Commissioners include Chair Bruce Newell of Helena; Kenning Arlitsch, appointee of the commissioner of Higher Education; Elsie Arntzen of Helena, Superintendent of Public

Instruction; Connie Eissinger of Brockway; Anne Kish of Twin Bridges; Aaron LaFromboise of Browning; and Ken Wall of Missoula.

The State Library Commission sets forth policies and funding priorities that empower the State Library to meet its mission and statutory obligations and to advocate for the State Library and the Montana library and information communities whenever possible.

Members of the public who wish to join the meeting remotely can login at <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/147009733>. You can also dial in using your phone.
United States : +1 (646) 749-3122
Access Code: 147-009-733

About the Montana State Library

Through its statewide programs, the Montana State Library empowers Montanans; enhances learning in families and communities; builds 21st Century skills; and provides opportunities for civic participation. For more information, visit <http://msl.mt.gov>.

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