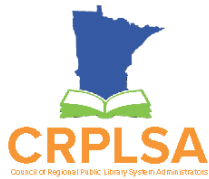




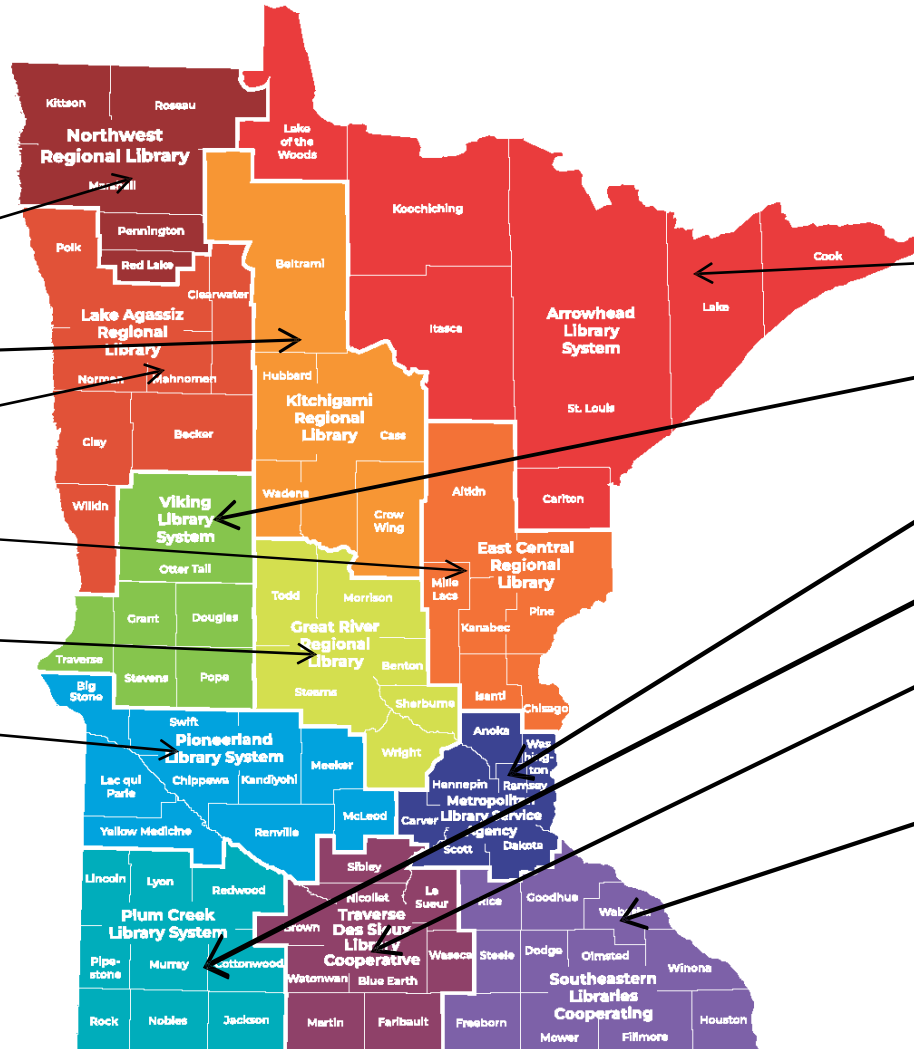
Sherry Wichitchu  
Executive Director



# Minnesota Regional Public Library Systems

## Consolidated Systems:

- Northwest
- Kitchigami
- Lake Agassiz
- East Central
- Great River
- Pioneerland



## Federated Systems:

- Arrowhead
- Viking
- MELSA
- Plum Creek
- Traverse des Sioux
- SELCO



# LOCAL FUNDING KEEPS LIBRARIES RUNNING. MELSA FUNDING MAKES THEM STRONGER TOGETHER.

## CITY AND COUNTY SUPPORT FUNDS:

LOCAL LIBRARY  
SYSTEM

BUILDINGS

STAFF

LOCAL PROGRAMS

## STATE SUPPORT FUNDS

COLLABORATION AMONG 100+ LIBRARIES

INTERLIBRARY LOANS

EBOOKS AND DIGITAL  
RESOURCES

**TOGETHER:  
EXPANDED ACCESS, EFFICIENT USE OF PUBLIC FUNDS, AND EQUITABLE SERVICE  
ACROSS COUNTIES**



### SHARED ACCESS

BORROW ACROSS  
100+ LOCATIONS



### DIGITAL RESOURCES

24/7 ACCESS  
REGIONWIDE



### EQUITY

CONSISTENT  
RESOURCES  
ACROSS  
COMMUNITIES



### EFFICIENCY

MAXIMIZES  
TAXPAYER  
INVESTMENT

# Benefits to Member Libraries



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MELSA provides over **\$2.7 million in direct support** for member libraries in the metro area, investing money and resources in response to the needs of our libraries and our communities.



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MELSA also provides over **\$2.5 million in collaborative purchases and programs** to benefit member libraries and communities.



Libby.

---

MELSA invests over **\$800,000 in a shared ebook and e-audiobook collections** that is the most used ematerial library consortium in the world.



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MELSA speaks with **one unified voice** for metro libraries—advocating for funding, policies, and priorities that are **more effective** at scale than any single library working alone.

# Current State of Library eBooks

**Libraries pay 3-5x to rent the same ebook as individuals pay to own**



**Libraries don't own eBooks**

They license them under restrictive contracts

Rental expires after:

2 years OR 26 checkouts/renewals

# The Impact

## Access and Equity

- Limits access for those who need it most
- eBooks and audiobooks are essential for those with visual or reading impairments



## Cost to taxpayers

- Taxpayer dollars spent again and again on the same books



## System-level impact

- Higher costs = fewer titles = less access across communities





# Legislative Solution

## A Smarter Approach to eBook Licensing (HF3698/SF3685)

### Removes Harmful Restrictions

- Stops unfair contract terms
  - No bans on interlibrary loan
  - No artificial limits on use + time
  - No limits on purchasing access

### Restores Library Control

- Libraries manage their own collections
  - Choose how materials are shared
  - Build collections based on community need
  - Operate like physical materials

### Protects Public Investment

- Better value for taxpayer dollars
  - Reduces repeated purchasing
  - Encourages fairer pricing models
  - Expands access across communities

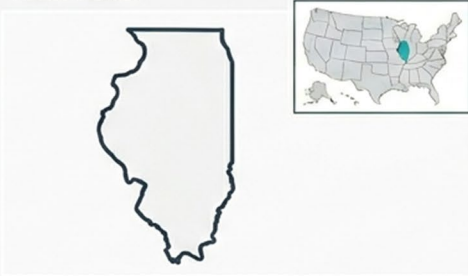
**Modeled on recently passed Connecticut law**

✓ Based on contract law (not federal copyright)

✓ Proven, replicable approach

# 2026 eBook Legislation Across the Nation

ILLINOIS



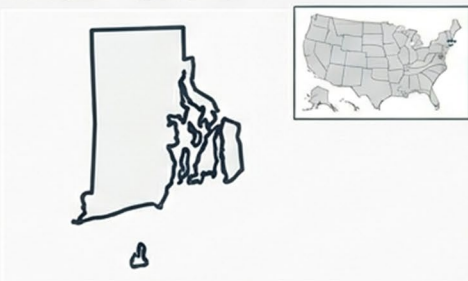
NEW JERSEY



MASSACHUSETTS



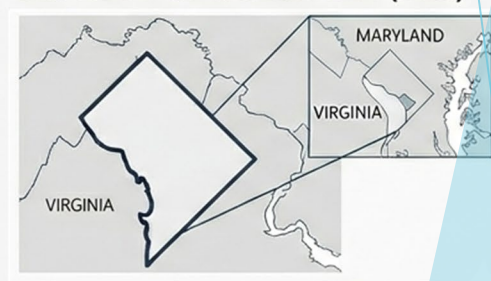
RHODE ISLAND



HAWAII



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (D.C.)





MINNESOTA LIBRARY  
ASSOCIATION

# PUBLIC LIBRARY EBOOK LICENSING

The Minnesota Library Association (MLA) is pursuing legislation to adjust restrictive eBook and digital audiobook licensing contracts. Current terms impose significant financial burdens and access limitations on public libraries, compromising their ability to serve all Minnesota residents.

## THE PROBLEM

### High Costs and Restrictive Terms

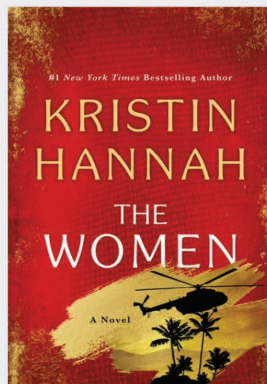
- Exorbitant Prices:** Library eBooks & digital audiobooks are significantly more expensive than consumer versions. Libraries often pay four to five times what a consumer pays for the same eBook.
- Licensing vs. Ownership:** eBooks are licensed, not bought. Libraries typically lease them through aggregators (like OverDrive or Hoopla) and cannot lease directly from publishers. This results in fewer rights and more restrictions.
- Forced Repurchasing:** Licenses typically have an expiration date, commonly two years or 26 check-outs. Once an expiration condition is met, the title disappears, and the library is forced to re-lease it, costing taxpayers repeatedly over the title's life.

## THE LEGISLATIVE SOLUTION

The MLA is pursuing legislation, similar to recent statutory provisions passed in Connecticut, based on contract law, not federal copyright<sup>17</sup>. This legislation would prohibit publicly funded libraries from entering into license agreements that contain certain onerous terms.

- Protect Taxpayer Dollars:** Curb high costs and forced repurchasing, promoting fiscal responsibility.
- Restore Local Control:** Provide libraries with more authority over their collections and preservation of Minnesota resources.
- Ensure Access:** Guarantee fair access to essential digital collections for all Minnesota residents, especially those relying on public libraries for accessible materials.

## HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO READ KRISTIN HANNAH?



### Consumers Pay:

eAudiobook- \$32.99  
 eBook- \$14.99  
 Print Book- \$18.77

### Libraries Pay:

eAudiobook- \$60 **↑\$27.01**  
 eBook- \$60 **↑\$45.01**  
 Print Book- \$16.50 **↓\$2.27**

**Additionally, eBooks are licensed, not bought. They typically include an expiration date of 2 years or 26 check-outs.**

