



Press Release

Books Not Bureaucracy Gallagher Opposes Library District But Supports Funding

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(Denver) Denver Auditor Dennis Gallagher today came out in opposition to the creation of a special Library District in Denver but in support of dedicated funding for Denver libraries. In a letter to Mayor Michael Hancock and City Council President Chris Nevitt, Gallagher stated his opposition to the creation of a new bureaucracy and another level of government but did state that he believes that a dedicated mill levy for the library is necessary.

Gallagher said that the library is one of his great passions and one of the city's great resources. But, he said that he is very concerned about the continuing viability or even existence of the library because of the ongoing budget shortfall problems in Denver. The library system is funded out of the city's General Fund at approximately \$30 Million annually.

"It is vital that we maintain our wonderful library system and access to it for all of our citizens; to educate and entertain us; to enlighten and brighten our lives. However, the severe budget situation our city faces – too many needs and not enough resources - threatens the viability if not the very existence of our libraries. We must do something to ensure the vitality of our libraries while relieving the budget burden on the city's general fund," Gallagher said in the letter.

Using the term, 'Books not Bureaucracy', Gallagher said he supports a dedicated mill levy for the library but that creating a whole new bureaucracy and another level of government is the wrong way to address the problem. He also said that as Auditor, representing the interests of Denver taxpayers, he is believer that giving away \$200 Million dollars in library assets is unnecessary and irresponsible

” Don't give away for free our libraries, the land they sit on, the books, paintings, western history collection, furniture, vehicles and everything else that Denver citizens have spent over \$200,000,000 to acquire,” he said. “Rather, let's keep those assets and create a dedicated source of funding to maintain and enhance them. “

Gallagher stated that his proposal for a 3.6 mill levy for the library is cheaper for Denver taxpayers than the plan being proposed to create a Library District and that even the proponents of the District acknowledge that. He also said that he believes Denver voters will support funding for libraries and that he will lead the effort to ensure that. However, he also said that he would lead the opposition to the establishment of a Library District, if it came to that.

He closed the letter by noting that in the past Denver has allowed city-owned assets such as McNichols Arena and Mile High Stadium that generated millions of dollars in seat tax and other revenue, to be given away and getting nothing in return for the value of the asset or the lost revenue.

“We can have a wonderful library system without giving it away – Books, Not Bureaucracy!”