Joint Statement on deliverIT CT issued by the Short Term and Long Term Task Forces operating as a committee of the whole.

The Connecticut State Library and our library community are facing many challenges, most notably cuts to library budgets on all levels. The statewide delivery service, known as deliverIT CT, has seen decreased funding for several years and experienced the loss of a key service partner when Avant ended its contract with the State of Connecticut. Meanwhile, resource sharing has increased as libraries strive to keep to our commitments to providing the best service possible to our patrons. These combining factors make it quite apparent that the current delivery system does not have the capacity to meet the demands placed upon it.

The State Library responded to this crisis in a number of ways, including ensuring that a delivery system was available to libraries. Recognizing Connecticut’s fiscal reality, the State Library turned to the library community to directly participate in the successful mitigation of the most immediate issues and to also cultivate a viable recommendation for creating a fair, equitable resource sharing network. This resulted in the creation of the peer led volunteer Short and Long Term Task Forces. The State Library, also at the request of the library community, hired an outside consultant, Jim Minges of Minges Associates, to specifically evaluate deliverIT CT.

The Short Term and Long Term Task Forces have been meeting to develop possible solutions. Ones that will start now and continue into the future. It is our hope to find a course of action that will meet all the demands on the system, and also equitably meet the needs of the entire library community. The solution, or solutions as the case might be, must be responsive to current demands yet remain flexible to meet future needs and trends.

As part of our Task Force work, we have read and discussed the consultant’s reports. The entirety of the library community received the report today, Jan 17, 2017. The report’s findings validate our independent research. It is clear that given the resources allocated to deliverIT CT, which are unlikely to increase, deliverIT CT and their staff are doing the very best they can under the circumstances. The State Library is as committed to the delivery service, as our libraries are to providing the best possible service we can to our patrons.

It is clear that the service is also dependent upon the library community as well. Change needs to be made, but it cannot happen overnight, nor can it happen without the necessary revenue. It will take time to build a model that will work for all of us. As a committee of the whole, Short and Long Term Task Forces combined, we urge the following:

- There is a need to educate the library community and our patrons with “one voice” in the hope we can work together to minimize frustrations and misinformation.
- As the Task Forces move forward as a committee of the to find a viable solution, we ask all libraries to follow the lending guidelines put in place by the State Librarian.
- With the need for accurate data to create a strong system for all, we ask that all libraries receiving deliverIT CT services participate in all surveys put out by the State.
- We ask the State Library and deliverIT CT to provide optimal service by continually evaluating and adjusting logistics, routes, schedules, and staffing. We ask participating deliverIT CT libraries to keep their staff informed of changes and to use the current channels of communication of delivery concerns to the State.
We suggest all libraries back date incoming deliverIT CT returns by 1 month to avoid late fees and as a show of good faith in and to foster good will between our patrons and our libraries.

We request that All libraries review their resource sharing practices, and through policy and/or software adjustments, to remove unnecessary transits.

There is nothing more certain in life than change. Libraries know all about change, evolution of services, and adaptation to new realities. However, there is one thing that does not and will not change as we reshape deliverIT CT. Libraries build strong communities and strong communities build strong states. Together, the State Library and the library community will keep Connecticut strong for all citizens.

Sincerely,

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