



south carolina STATE LIBRARY

To: Discus Users, Members of the South Carolina General Assembly
From: Leesa M. Aiken, Agency Director, South Carolina State Library
Date: May 24, 2016
Subject: Amended Budget for South Carolina State Library

The State Library opposes the Amended version of the Senate's budget regarding the State Library's Content Licensing of electronic resources. The details of the amendment significantly limit Discus resources, and in some instances are not technologically possible. With regards to specific items noted:

1. Responsive web design (RWD) means that sites adjust to the device that you are using so that you don't have to scroll, resize, etc., manually. Discus does have RWD, some more robust sites in Discus do not use RWD to the smallest measure. These materials are made primarily for the classroom and work 100% of the time in the manner for which they are intended, which is by teachers and students. It's important to note that technology changes rapidly and the SC State Library has led the field in ensuring all 9 of our websites were RWD.
2. Technology changes rapidly - H.264/MPEG-4 AVC format for videos is either being used by all vendors currently or is in development. This technology will continue to change over time, and should remain flexible so that videos are able to be played using multiple devices, rather than to a specific format that is current as of today, which may also be outdated by next year. However, the approach remains solid, to provide access to all material using multiple kinds of devices. We have over 60,000 videos online which meet the requested format. Videos that don't meet the suggestion were able to be used 99.7% of the time when accessed. Inability to view videos on smartphones represents .00400% of overall use.
3. It is impossible to quantify the information on the internet and determine what 20% of "free" material would be. Information is added constantly, there is no way to monitor and measure information on the internet. Additionally, Discus is South Carolina's Virtual Library, and is used primarily by the K-12 community. It is the trusted site for teachers, students, and parents; the integrity of the material provided is cornerstone to the entire program. The purpose of Discus is to have as much accurate, vetted information as possible in one trusted place for use. Adopting item #3 completely goes against the mission of Discus.
4. The State Library has led the movement in requiring geo-location and geo-authentication in the online library field, which is something that the Legislature can be proud of. Cellular telephone technology changes rapidly; we and the vendors that we select continue to meet or work to meet changing technology needs. There are no vendors in South Carolina or otherwise who can meet all of the designations made in item #4.

Finally, this amendment does not follow the authority practices afforded to other state agencies and it places undue restrictions that are not logical or reasonable on the South Carolina State Library. The impact if adopted will be negative and significant for our teachers, students, and citizens. Last year, Discus was used over 42 million times. The services that we provide through Discus are vital and help to provide equality of access to information to all citizens, primarily those most vulnerable without access to smartphones, tablets, and other technology devices.