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Senate of Pennsylvania

November 17, 2009

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President & Members
Pittsburgh City Council
510 City County Building
414 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Council President Shields & Members:

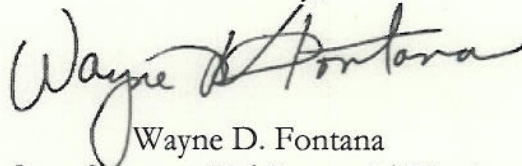
Please consider this letter as evidence of my support for Council President Shields' proposal to authorize an immediate \$600,000 grant to Carnegie Library as a one-time, "bridge" funding mechanism. It is my understanding that those funds are contingent upon the Library's agreement that the neighborhood branches designated for closure remain open.

With the passage of Council President Shields' legislation, the City moves a step closer to meeting the goal of protecting these affected neighborhood branches. This funding is an integral part of the solutions, long-term and short-term, that are being considered and worked on, even today. Your support and commitment to securing the vital roles that the library plays in our communities is absolutely imperative. I understand the concerns that you have voiced publicly and affirm to you that I will continue to work with you and my colleagues to help address them. I have called on the Carnegie Library to change its philosophies and priorities to one that focuses first on keeping our branches open before other items are addressed and hope that you will join me in that effort as well. This refocus must be part of the conversation to ensure that our long-term solutions are as effective as they can be for our communities.

Andrew Carnegie believed that libraries allow people to acquire the knowledge to improve themselves, regardless of their personal wealth. He expected the community to fully embrace the importance of the library and financially support its operations. Closing the branches that provide free access to information in the neighborhoods that most need it is not the solution. On behalf of myself and my constituents, I respectfully request your support in this fight through your approval of Council President Shields' legislation as we

work together to refocus the priorities of the Carnegie Library and change its philosophy to one that protects Andrew Carnegie's legacy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wayne D. Fontana". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Wayne D. Fontana
State Senator, 42nd Senatorial District

WF/amd