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**December 2, 2024**

**TO: RAILS Resource Sharing Committee**  
**FROM: Joe Filapek, RAILS Associate Executive Director**  
**SUBJECT: Resource Sharing Participation**

As outlined in the [Illinois Library System Act](#), [Illinois Administrative Code](#) and the [RAILS Resource Sharing Plan](#), participation in resource sharing activities remains a foundational condition of membership into a regional library system. While the degree to which a library participates in resource sharing may vary due to organizational or other external limitations, RAILS member libraries are expected to participate as completely as possible. While most of our members fully participate, RAILS still needs to regularly promote both the benefits and the responsibilities of resource sharing.

Two of the primary avenues for resource sharing are interlibrary loan and reciprocal borrowing. While RAILS has a responsibility for supporting resource sharing, we often encounter a knowledge gap in these two areas – whether it be libraries who don't understand their options for interlibrary loan and/or libraries who are unaware of their responsibility to participate in reciprocal borrowing. We hope to have a conversation with the resource sharing committee on December 9<sup>th</sup> to hear your input on how RAILS could be most helpful in this area.

I will provide some examples during our conversation for additional context, and I look forward to our discussion.