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DATE: March 4, 2026
TO: RAILS Universal Service Committee
FROM: Joe Filapek, Associate Executive Director
SUBJECT: Community College Library Survey

As you will recall from previous meetings, the RAILS Universal Service Committee requested staff to conduct a short survey of community college libraries to better understand how they currently serve residents within their districts, including individuals who are not enrolled students and may reside in an unserved area. The survey was designed to help inform this committee's ongoing discussions about expanding access for the nearly one million Illinois residents who live in areas without public library service. We were pleased to receive a response rate of 66%, which is very similar to the response rate from a similar survey conducted in 2018 and provides a helpful snapshot of current practices across community college libraries.

Preliminary results indicate that only a small number of community college libraries currently track information about patrons' public library affiliation, and a relatively small percentage actively promote their services either to public libraries or to residents within their districts more broadly. These findings provide useful context as the committee considers potential strategies for expanding access to library services for the unserved. We will share additional details and discuss the survey results more fully with the committee during our March 13 meeting.