



## **NYLA 2020 - 2021 NYS Budget Statement**

### ***Reductions in Library Aid Held to 3% in Difficult NYS Budget***

As we all know, the last few weeks have been anything but “usual”. For New Yorkers, our lives seemed to change daily. What started with an emergency being declared state-wide quickly transpired to the closure of businesses and schools and the eventual adoption of the PAUSE Act, requiring all non-essential employees to stay at home, practice social distancing and take all precautions necessary to protect ourselves, our loved ones and our community from the coronavirus.

The impact of COVID-19 affected the legislature and the annual budget process heavily. The Capitol closed to the public, forcing grassroots and professional advocates alike to work behind their screens instead of “off the floor”. The Senate and Assembly forewent the historical introduction of “one-house” proposals. And with a continuing number of positive cases across the state (including several members of the legislature), the houses adopted policies and procedures to allow elected officials to participate in meetings and the voting process from their districts instead of the chamber. Most importantly, the \$6B deficit the legislature was forced to maneuver around in January, has snowballed with expenditures to support the health crisis.

Unlike in recent years, the FY2020-21 budget did not pass on time. As a matter of fact, the Assembly remained “in session” until 3:30 a.m. Friday, April 3. The process may have been unusual, and our state’s financial projections may continue to shift, but your sustained and effective advocacy efforts did not.

#### **State Library Aid: \$94.1M**

As you know, Governor Cuomo proposed \$91.6M Library Aid in this year’s Executive Budget, a \$5M cut from last year’s enacted budget. With the support of our friends in the Senate and Assembly, who were given the difficult responsibility of determining reductions across the budget, we secured \$2.5M. The FY2020-21 enacted budget for State Library Aid will be \$94.1M.

#### **State Public Library Construction Aid: \$14M**

The Governor proposed a \$20M cut in capital funding – from \$34M back to \$14M. Despite the efforts of thousands of library advocates, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic made the reinstatement of this program unworkable. As the state regains its fiscal health, our hope is to see this program grow once more.

#### **Budget Adjustments**

The Governor, in partnership with the Department of Budget, will review the State’s revenue and expenditures throughout the year (three periods). If deemed necessary, the authority has been granted to the Governor to make budget adjustments. Any changes would require notice to the Legislature.