



**LOBBY DAY - TALKING POINTS:
Reject 5th Cut to Libraries**

- Library usage is up across the country and state. Visits to libraries have increased by 9% from 2005 to 2008 from 107 million to 117 million and probably more in 2009. Circulation has also grown from 142 million items in 2005 to 156 million in 2008. (9% increase). Even though NYS population only grew by 1.3% between 2005 and 2008.
- As more and more Americans look for employment, libraries help level the playing field for job seekers. Fewer than 44 percent of the top 100 U.S. retailers accept in-store paper applications. The unemployed are turning to library computers and Internet access to find work, apply for jobs online, type and print resumes, and open email accounts (according to U.S. Census Bureau – 38% of Americans still do not have internet access at home).
- Libraries are also providing education and training programs that help people acquire the knowledge needed to obtain jobs or advance in their careers, like computer and GED classes, resume writing and interview skills, etc.
- A 2009 survey of New York libraries reported 80% of libraries have helped someone search for a job and another 75% reported they helped a patron access public assistance.
- Families are also using the library to save money – by borrowing books, CDs, and DVDs, reading newspapers and magazines, and attending cultural, literacy and tax preparation programs.
- According to the NYS Library, over the past three years 97% of public library budgets have been approved by their voters, showing that New Yorkers overwhelmingly support funding for library services.

--Now is not the time to cut libraries!--

- Library Aid has already been cut four times in the last two years, declining from \$102 million in 2007 to \$86.8 million in 2009. The latest proposed cut would reduce funding by \$2.4 million to \$84.4 million or below 1998 levels. The combined cuts will result in a reduction of over \$2.8 million in federal LSTA funds for NYS.
- Library Aid makes up less than 1% of the state budget, yet libraries serve 57% of the state's population (9 million registered users) or 75% of New York households.
- Cuts in Library Aid fall heaviest upon library systems – which serve as the backbone of our information infrastructure, and provide the cost-sharing, shared services and collaborative approach that save libraries and their patrons money. Library systems ensure equal access for all New Yorkers no matter what the size of or the resources available at their public, school or college library.
- Libraries were among the last to receive increases during good economic times, going 8 years (1998-2006) without an increase and yet are the first to receive cuts when economic conditions worsen.

