NY’s Libraries are in Crisis

Stagnant funding for New York’s Public Library Construction Aid Program has left our libraries devastated and in critical need of support.

Funding has been stuck at $14M annually since 2006, despite a 2014 State Education Department report to the NYS Legislature that states that this funding shortage has resulted in accumulated deferred maintenance costs estimated at $2.2B.

While these photos show how serious the situation is, they represent only a fraction of the photos and stories sent in from libraries across the state.

NYLA and NY’s libraries urge you to fairly fund the Public Library Construction Aid Program!

Ongoing Crises at NY’s Libraries:
- Chronic water damage
- Aging heating / cooling systems
- Overcrowding
- Crumbling infrastructure
- ADA inaccessible
- Energy inefficient infrastructure
- Out-of-service facilities & equipment

Gloversville Public Library has an 111 year old boiler - the library’s sole source of heat. There is no AC.

As the Niagara Falls Public Library settles, the cement floor buckles and cracks beneath staff and patrons’ feet.

The tech room at the Darwin R. Barker Library in Fredonia is threatened by a tear in the roof membrane.
Our state’s library infrastructure is rapidly aging
- Over 48% of public libraries in New York are 60+ years old; 33% are 30+ years old
- More than 24% of public libraries do not have all public areas accessible to wheelchairs
- The age of these critical community assets means they are extremely energy inefficient, forcing libraries to use ever-increasing amounts of operating revenue for energy costs. This results in reduced hours of operation, and scaled-back programming and collection development

Library use has evolved and space is being used differently
- Patrons now rely on their local libraries for internet access, space for library programs, & community meeting rooms
- Libraries need to renovate existing space to address this reality

Libraries are critical public infrastructure;
Investment benefits every community and every New Yorker
- NYC’s recent budget included a 10yr/$300M capital commitment to improve library infrastructure
- NYS recently committed to a 5yr/$900M investment in state parks
- NYS is contemplating a $8.3B to address transportation infrastructure in NYC
- NYS must make a long-overdue investment in library infrastructure that matches NYC’s investment