



**NYLA 2017 BUDGET PRIORITY**

**Increase Funding for the Public Library Capital Aid Program to \$50M**

**Background:**

- The most recent available data provided by the New York State Education Department's Division of Library Development (DLD) articulates an existing \$2.2B in needed capital investment statewide
- Despite a stated commitment to public infrastructure improvements, Governor Cuomo's Executive Budget cut the Public Library Capital Aid program by 25%, from \$19M to \$14M, just one year after the program received its first funding increase in a decade
- Chronic failure to adequately fund local libraries' capital needs falls disproportionately on communities with diminished economic resources
- Without immediate, significant state investment public libraries remain unable to accommodate advances in technological infrastructure, make investments in energy efficiency, or increase access to differently-abled patrons

**Data Points:**

- **New York State's public libraries are rapidly aging**
  - More than 48% of local libraries are over 60 years old; an additional 33% are over 30 years old
  - More than 24% are not accessible to differently-abled patrons
  - Libraries simply cannot afford to maintain outdated buildings with decades-old HVAC systems – the lack of investment has forced the sale of some public libraries
- **Public Libraries require capital investment to accommodate high-speed broadband infrastructure**
  - Underinvestment disproportionately impacts historically underserved populations and economically disadvantaged communities, widening the digital divide
  - A January 2015 Siena poll found that for 33% of African-American and Latino respondents, and 25% of households making less than \$50,000 annually, the public library is their **primary source of internet access**;
- **Public Libraries desperately require energy-efficient infrastructure upgrades**
  - Library use has surged statewide among all demographics, leading to longer hours and increased energy costs
  - Libraries in economically disadvantaged communities cannot afford basic investment in energy-efficient upgrades; increased operating costs have forced shorter hours, reduced staffing, and reduced programming
- **The Public Library Capital Aid matching program boosts local economies**
  - Since 2006, state investment in this program has leveraged \$460M in local funding – a nearly 5:1 return
- **Public Library capital needs have been comparatively underfunded**
  - Public schools: \$2.3B, five-year capital investment (Library Capital Aid = 4.1%)
  - Higher Education: \$3.2B, five-year capital investment in SUNY & CUNY
  - State Parks: \$900M, five-year capital commitment to fully address \$1B in deferred maintenance