



**NYLA 2017 BUDGET PRIORITY**

**Fair and Equitable Library Funding:  
Increase State Library Aid in Proportion with Increases in Education Funding**

**Background:**

- New York State Education Law requires state library funding in FY 2017-2018 to be \$102.6M
- Governor Cuomo continues to defund local public libraries – this year’s Executive Budget cuts library funding 4%, despite the assertion that Education funding will increase at least 4%
- More than \$111M in statutory library funding has been withheld since 2007, dramatically reducing critical services and opportunities on which the most economically and socially vulnerable New Yorkers rely
- Governor Cuomo’s budget proposes year-2001 library funding – the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year New York State will defund state library aid, let alone meet the minimum statutory appropriation for quality library services
- Library services are a core component of our state’s education infrastructure – **State Library Aid should be fully funded under the law, but must at least increase each year in proportion with education funding.**

**Data points:**

- **Library usage and demand for services are surging statewide**
  - A 2017 Siena Research poll again confirms five-year rolling data: library use is surging statewide; 15% among women respondents aged 18-34, nearly 15% among African-American respondents, 15% among Latino respondents, and among all income demographics; usage is up 20% nearly for households earning less than \$50,000 annually.
- **Libraries are a core component of our state’s educational infrastructure – LIBRARIES ARE EDUCATION**
  - The same 2017 Siena Poll found that 92% of New Yorkers say the public library is an important part of their local education system; this includes more than 96% of women, African-American, Latinos, and households earning less than \$50,000 annually
  - More than 60% of respondents – nearly 12 million New Yorkers – have used their local public library in the last 6 months; of those respondents, nearly 70% of African-American & Latino respondents bring their children to their library’s childhood literacy programs
  - Libraries are the leading digital literacy educators in New York State. When schools close at the end of each day, each week and each school year, libraries remain open to New York’s children and families.
- **Libraries are critical for access and equality**
  - This recent Siena polling data has also found that for nearly 2 million New Yorkers – including 33% of African-American and Latino respondents, and 25% of households making less than \$50,000 annually - the local public library is their **primary source of internet access**;
  - For respondents who have used their local public library for job-seeking or career-building programs in the last 6 months, 40% are African-American, 35% are Latino, 30% are aged 55 and older, and 40% are from households earning less than \$50,000 annually



**NYLA 2017 BUDGET PRIORITY**

**Increase Funding for the Public Library Capital Aid Program to \$25M**

**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



*The Voice of the Library Community*

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## **NYLA 2017 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

### **Guarantee Students' Rights to School Libraries and Librarians**

[A.6023 Solages](#) / no same as

#### **Background:**

- New York State Law currently denies the right for all students to access quality school libraries staffed by professionally certified school library media specialists, with instruction in information literacy and proper research techniques. Students leave UPK-12 instruction unprepared to succeed at the college level because they lack research, reference, and writing skills.
- While secondary schools are subject to Commissioner's Education Regulations, many districts disregard these regs, and some school systems seek waivers from these provisions – NYCDOE, for example. Providing instruction in these crucial skills is completely discretionary in elementary schools. This creates tremendous inequality based on local economic conditions.

#### **Impact:**

- Failure to guarantee instruction in information literacy ensures New York's high school graduates will continue to be burdened with increasing college debt, enter their college careers unprepared for the rigors of undergraduate coursework, and leave them particularly vulnerable to financial exploitation from misleading and "fake" sources of information.

### **Taxpayer Access to Publicly-Funded Research**

#### **Background:**

- New York State spends millions of taxpayer dollars each year to fund critical research initiatives. Despite this considerable state funding, when the taxpayer-funded research is published in academic journals, private for-profit companies deny access to this information.
- This legislation requires that New York State taxpayer-funded research be made available online by the state agencies that underwrite the research. This bill would bring NYS in line with the federal standards employed by the National Institute of Health, and the State of California.

#### **Impact:**

- This bill would eliminate an area of double taxation by making taxpayer-funded scholarly research available after one year.

### **Equitable Access to DASNY Financing for Public Libraries**

[S.5303 Ritchie](#) / no same as

#### **Background:**

- This legislation would make all public libraries eligible for low-cost financing through the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York. Currently, any library seeking desperately-needed financing for capital improvements must be individually approved in law.

#### **Impact:**

- This legislation would remove an antiquated and cumbersome roadblock for libraries in need of timely renovations, and ensure local taxpayers have access to DASNY's expertise and low-cost services.