



NYLA 2016 BUDGET PRIORITY – LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION AID

Increase Investment in State Library Aid Construction Program to \$30M Annually

Background:

- State investment in the Library Aid Construction Program has **remained stagnant since 2006**, at \$14M annually
- This is despite a documented accumulated capital need of \$2.2B statewide, according to a 2014 State Education Department report to the state legislature

Messaging:

- **Our state's library infrastructure is rapidly aging**
 - Over 48% of public libraries in NYS are 60+ years old; an additional 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 usage and demand for services are surging**
 - A 2015 Siena Poll found library usage is up: 10% statewide, 15% among women respondents aged 18-34, nearly 15% among African-American respondents, 15% among Latino respondents, and among all income demographics, with usage up 20% for those households making less than \$50,000 annually
 - The poll also found that 70% of respondents have used their local library in the last six months
 - This increased usage is taxing already-strained infrastructure. Much of the capital need stems from malfunctioning mechanical equipment, leaky roofs, and overburdened electrical distribution systems
- **Library use has evolved and space is being used differently**
 - Patrons now rely on their local libraries for internet access, classroom space for library programs, and community meeting rooms – libraries need to renovate existing space to address this reality
 - The January 2015 Siena poll found for nearly 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**;
 - Of the respondents who have used their local public library for job seeking or career building programs in the last six months, 53% were African-American, and 40% were households making less than \$50,000 annually
- **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 to improve state parks
 - NYS is contemplating a \$8.3B investment to address transportation infrastructure in NYC, with likely billions more statewide
 - NYS must make a long-overdue investment in library infrastructure that matches NYC's investment