



NYLA 2016 BUDGET PRIORITY – STATE LIBRARY AID

Increase State Library Aid Proportionally with Increases in Education Funding

Background:

- New York State Education Law requires Library Aid for FY 2016-2017 to be \$102.6M, based on the most recent census data. Total funding in last year's enacted budget was \$91.6M. This places library aid below year 2000 funding levels.
- In this year's Executive Budget, Governor Cuomo proposed a nearly \$1B increase in total education funding, but proposed flat funding for State Library Aid.

Messaging:

- **LIBRARIES ARE EDUCATION:** Libraries are a core component of our state's educational infrastructure, and state library aid should increase each year in proportion to increases in education funding
 - A January 2015 Siena Poll found that **94% of New Yorkers say their local library is an important part of our education system**, with **nearly half saying library aid should increase proportionately to increase in education funding**.
 - Libraries are chartered by the same Board of Regents that oversees schools, colleges, BOCES and other educational institutions, and library aid is administered through the NYS Department of Education. 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.
 - According to New York Public Library, the most circulated book in The Bronx for 2015 was a test prep guide for the high school equivalency exam.
- **Library usage and demand for services are surging**
 - A January 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.
- **Libraries are critical for access and equality**
 - The same 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
 - State Library Aid ensures that **every** community has access to the quality library services our children, families and seniors deserve
- **Libraries and library systems are models of shared services** and collaborative planning. According to the State Education Department, local communities realize \$7 in services for every \$1 allocated in state aid.



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



NYLA 2016 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Expand Access to School Libraries and Librarians

S.3931 Farley/A.6784-A Solages

Background:

- Currently, elementary schools are not required to staff a certified School Library Media Specialist. Secondary schools are only required to do so in Commissioner's Education Regulations, not by state statute. Many school districts disregard the Commissioner's regulations; the NYC Department of Education previously sought a waiver from this requirement.
- Students with access to school libraries staffed by certified School Library Media Specialists consistently score 15-20% higher in English Language Arts tests by the fourth grade according to a study conducted at Syracuse University.

Impact:

- Passing this bill would ensure that all students, K-12, have access to a school library staffed by a certified school librarian. Having access to a certified school librarian would ensure students have equitable opportunities to develop strong digital literacy, critical thinking and information literacy skills regardless of economic status or school.

Taxpayer Access to Publicly-Funded Research

S.3952 Farley / A.1878 Hevesi

Background:

- This legislation requires New York State funded research published in peer-reviewed journals be made available online by the state agencies that underwrite such research. This bill would bring NYS in line with the federal standards employed by the National Institute of Health and the State of California.
- Currently, when publically-funded research is published in peer-reviewed journals, libraries must expend public dollars for public and scholarly access.

Impact:

- This bill would eliminate an area of double taxation by making taxpayer-funded scholarly research available after one year. Currently, private companies force libraries to expend tax dollars for access to research that has already been publicly-funded. This standard would follow the federal model.

Permit Collaborative Capital Improvements for Small & Rural Libraries **S.6651 Farley / A.9240 Abinanti**

Background:

- This legislation would permit small and rural libraries to secure financing through the Dormitory Authority of New York State (DASNY) for desperately-needed capital improvements by pooling projects together through the New York Library Association (NYLA). This measure would help to address an estimated \$2.2B in statewide capital improvement needs for smaller libraries.
- Many aging, local libraries are forced to defer basic infrastructure needs because their project costs do not reach DASNY's minimum bonding threshold. Allowing NYLA to aggregate small projects will create cost efficiencies, enhance collaborative planning, and help libraries address aging infrastructure.

Impact:

- If local libraries were permitted to partner and aggregate smaller infrastructure projects to meet DASNY's bonding threshold, the sharing of fixed costs would allow these projects to move forward.
- This legislation is analogous to existing authority for members of the New York State Rehabilitation Association and NYSARC, Inc.