



KIMBERLY JEAN-PIERRE
 Assemblywoman 11th District
 Suffolk County

THE ASSEMBLY
 STATE OF NEW YORK
 ALBANY

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 Legislative Women's Caucus
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 Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and
 Asian Legislative Caucus
 Task Force on Women's Issues

February 17, 2022

The Honorable Carl E. Heastie
 Speaker of the Assembly
 932 Legislative Office Building
 Albany, NY 12248

Dear Speaker Heastie,

We write today to respectfully request an increase in funding for our public libraries in the Assembly FY22-23 one-house budget proposal. For many years the Assembly Majority has long supported adequate funding for New York State's libraries and library systems. During these unprecedented times, these critical entities have continued to provide critical services, education, technology infrastructure, and access to information to over 19.5 million New Yorkers statewide, including more than 10 million who hold library cards. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, libraries have stepped up across the state to provide vital services to communities including internet access for remote student learners, virtual programming for all ages, and access to important health and safety resources and information. Moreover, with a tremendous increase in electronic readership and skyrocketing costs associated with the licensure of electronic publications (E-Books), our public libraries need support now more than ever.

During each of the prior five years, the Executive Budget Proposal had called for *reductions* in library aid at times when our libraries needed assistance the most. While we are pleased that this year's Executive Budget Proposal calls for an increase in aid to public libraries, a mere \$2 million increase comes far too short of what is truly needed. To this end, we are requesting the following support:

State Library Aid:

The 2022-23 Executive Budget proposes to increase funding for Aid to Public Libraries by a mere \$2 million for a total of \$96.1 million. State Library Aid ensures that every community and every New Yorker has access to quality library materials and services, and according to the State Education Department, every dollar invested in the State Library Aid program yields seven dollars' worth of local library services. Unfortunately, sustained underfunding has led to depleted services, degraded technology assets and diminished educational programming. We recommend the Assembly increase State Library Aid funding to **\$123.1 million**.

Library Construction Aid:

For the past several years, the Executive has slashed Library Construction Aid at a time when statewide library renovation and construction needs are estimated to be \$1.5 billion. Investment in the Library Construction Aid program must be increased to address aging infrastructure, energy inefficient buildings and the evolving ways that patrons use their libraries. We recommend the Assembly increase funding for the Library Construction Aid program to **\$45 million**.

A full restoration of \$250,000 in funding for the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and \$75,000 in funding for the Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center:

The Executive Budget eliminates funding for the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (\$250,000) and Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center (\$75,000). We recommend restoring funding for both of these longstanding

cultural institutions.

Love Your Library Funding:

The Love Your Library Fund was established nearly 17 years ago which collects funding through special DMV-issued license plates as well as corporate or personal income tax returns. Since the fund was created, none of the accumulate funds have been distributed. Thankfully, the Executive has proposed that **\$150,000** of this funding be earmarked for the Statewide Summer Reading Program; we agree with this proposal and ask that the Assembly Budget Proposal reflect this funding allocation as well.

By addressing the above-mentioned critical needs, we will be helping to ensure that our public libraries can continue to provide the critical services upon which all our constituents will continue to rely throughout the pandemic and in the years to come. As the Legislature continues developing strategies to reimagine New York's economy in a post-COVID-19 world, it is essential for our library institutions to remain a vital component of that process. On behalf of our public libraries, library systems and patrons, we thank you for your continued efforts and look forward to working with you and our colleagues to ensure our libraries remain a cornerstone of collaboration, awareness, equity, and education for all New Yorkers now and in the future. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

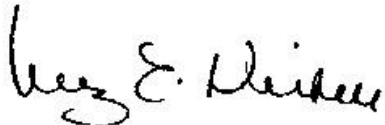
Sincerely,



Kimberly Jean-Pierre
Member of Assembly, 11th District
Chair, Committee on Libraries and Education Technology



John T. McDonald III
Member of Assembly, 108th District



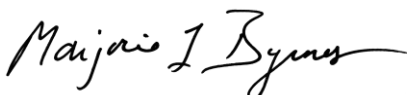
Inez E. Dickens
Member of Assembly, 70th District



Mike Lawler
Member of Assembly, 97th District



Marianne Buttenschon
Member of Assembly, 119th District



Marjorie Byrnes
Member of Assembly, 133rd District



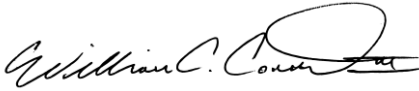
Harry B. Bronson
Member of Assembly, 138th District



Angelo J. Morinello
Member of Assembly, 145th District



Michael J. Norris
Member of Assembly, 144th District



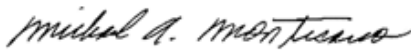
William Conrad
Member of Assembly, 140th District



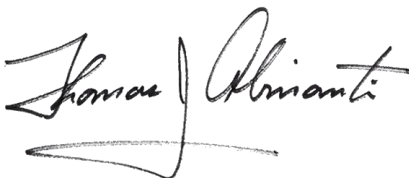
Jennifer Lunsford
Member of Assembly, 135th District



Carrie Woerner
Member of Assembly, 113th District



Michael Montesano
Member of Assembly, 15th District



Thomas J. Abinanti
Member of Assembly, 92nd District



Al Stirpe
Member of Assembly, 127th District



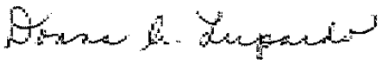
Andrew Hevesi
Member of Assembly, 28th District



Nader J. Sayegh
Member of Assembly, 90th District



Chris Tague
Member of Assembly, 102nd District



Donna A. Lupardo
Member of Assembly, 123rd District



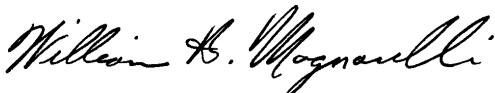
Josh Jensen
Member of Assembly, 134th District



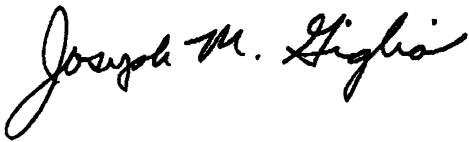
Gina Sillitti
Member of Assembly, 16th District



Christopher S. Friend
Member of Assembly, 124th District



William B. Magnarelli
Member of Assembly, 129th District



Joseph M. Giglio
Member of Assembly, 148th District



David G. McDonough
Member of Assembly, 14th District



Fred W. Thiele, Jr.
Member of Assembly, 1st District



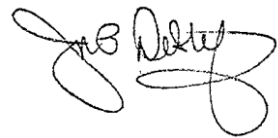
Edward P. Ra
Member of Assembly, 19th District



Steve Englebright
Member of Assembly, 4th District



Stephen Hawley
Member of Assembly, 139th District



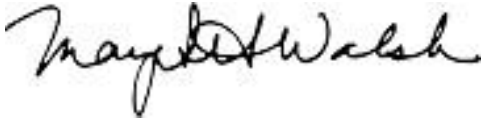
Joe DeStefano
Member of Assembly, 3rd District



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Richard N. Gottfried
Member of Assembly, 75th District



Mary Beth Walsh
Member of Assembly, 112th District



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Kenneth Zebrowski
Member of Assembly, 96th District



Latoya Joyner
Member of Assembly, 77th District



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Catalina Cruz
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Member of Assembly, 80th District



Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas
Member of Assembly, 34th District



Karen McMahon
Member of Assembly, 146th District



Sandy Galef
Member of Assembly, 95th District



Rebecca A. Seawright
Member of Assembly, 76th District



Mark Walczyk
Member of Assembly, 116th District



Jonathan G. Jacobson
Member of Assembly, 104th District



Brian D. Miller
Member of Assembly, 101st District



Maritza Davila
Member of Assembly, 53rd District



Monica P. Wallace
Member of Assembly, 143rd District



Yuh-Line Niou
Member of Assembly, 65th District



John K. Mikulin
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Jo Anne Simon
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Member of Assembly, 100th District



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Member of Assembly, 110th District



Didi Barrett
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Dr. Anna R. Kelles
Member of Assembly, 125th District



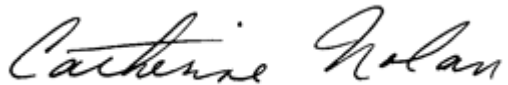
Kevin A. Cahill
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Robert C. Carroll
Member of Assembly, 44th District



Catherine Nolan
Member of Assembly, 37th District



Michaele C. Solages
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Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn
Member of Assembly, 42nd District