Increasing State Aid for Library Construction

**ISSUE:**

The Board of Regents supports all public libraries having the capacity to accommodate new technologies and provide the knowledge resources New Yorkers need to be successful in an information-driven global environment. Additional capital funding is needed to allow public libraries to continue to upgrade and modernize their facilities.

**BACKGROUND:**

- New York’s libraries are the public infrastructure that provides universal access to the three elements of digital equity: adequate internet, appropriate devices, and digital fluency skills.

- The State Aid for Library Construction Program is highly visible and has been very successful. During its fifteen years in existence, the program supported a total of 2,868 construction and renovation projects for 807 unique public library and library system facilities.

- The estimated need for new construction, expansion, and renovation of existing library facilities is over $1.52 billion through 2025, as more than half of all public library buildings in New York are now over 60 years old, and another 30% are between 30 and 60 years old.

- The 2021-2022 enacted state budget provided $34 million in capital funds to support State Aid for Library Construction.

**2022-2023 BUDGET REQUEST:**

$11 million in additional state funds over the 2021-2022 level, for a total of $45 million, to ensure that New York’s libraries are accessible to all library users and can accommodate advances in technology, including improvements to broadband infrastructure.

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