



*The Voice of the Library Community*

**New York Library Association**

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## **S5179 (Palumbo) / A5824 (Thiele)**

*An act to amend the retirement and social security law, in relation to participation by free association libraries in the New York state and local employees' retirement system*

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The New York Library Association (NYLA) supports the above referenced legislation.

If enacted, this bill would allow certain association libraries, who currently are ineligible, to participate in the State retirement system.

Public libraries in New York generally operate under one of four types of governance: municipal, school district, special district, and free association. While association libraries are subject to the same rights and responsibilities under the State's education law there is one glaring gap: the inconsistencies of eligibility to retirement benefits.

Municipal, school district and special district libraries all have retirement system options either due to their relationship with their local government and community or their charter as approved by the state. There are several association libraries that may offer retirement benefits through the state's system but those were established through individual legislative act.

Unfortunately, there are hundreds of association libraries who are not eligible for retirement through New York. As a result, many committed and talented library staff struggle to consider their life after they leave their library upon retirement. This also results in challenges to recruit and hire staff who upon applying must consider not only salary but benefits as well.

Permitting the participation by the remaining association libraries in the retirement system will provide equitable access to the importance benefits that we know as retirement and ensures that high quality library services for citizens in all parts of the State can continue at the hands of talented library staff.

For these reasons, the New York Library Association urges the legislature to pass S5179/A5824.

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