



The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

New York State Division of Budget
State Street & Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12207

December 20, 2021

Dear Governor Hochul,

Earlier this month, the New York Library Association contacted staff in the Executive Chamber to inquire about the Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund. We were dismayed to receive a response weeks later that the State's Division of Budget had not completed their proposal for the federal program and as a result, did not include libraries.

The Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund was established through the American Rescue Plan Act and provides \$10 billion for eligible states, territories and tribal communities for broadband infrastructure projects, digital connectivity technology projects and multi-purpose community facility projects. These projects must meet the following three criteria: (1) invests in capital assets designed to directly enable work, education, and health monitoring; (2) designed to address a critical need that resulted from or was made apparent or exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health emergency; and (3) designed to address a critical need of the community to be served by it.

Our counterparts at the American Library Association advised us that not only could New York receive up to \$100 million through the Fund but, library projects are explicitly eligible under the U.S. Department of Treasury guidance. Libraries, as you know, have been at the forefront of keeping communities connected during the COVID-19 pandemic, and are continuing to play key roles in addressing education, employment, and health needs during the ongoing recovery. With additional investment, these community institutions will be able to expand their reach and ensure our state's residents can thrive.

With a looming deadline of December 27, 2021, we implore the Division of Budget to submit an initial plan to the U.S. Department of Treasury. Furthermore, we request that libraries be included in such plans as partners so they may receive funds to assist their communities in digital equity efforts.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'EM', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Elizabeth Merkle
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Briana N. McNamee', written in a cursive style.

Briana McNamee
Director of Government Relations & Advocacy