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January 3, 2023

Amit S. Bagga, Deputy Secretary to the Governor, Intergovernmental Affairs  
Chatodd Floyd, Deputy Secretary for Legislative Affairs & Policy  
Michael Mastroianni, Assistant Secretary for Education  
NYS State Capital Bldg.  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Mr. Bagga, Mr. Floyd, and Mr. Mastroianni,

This letter expresses the OWWL Library System's support for including the Municipal Ballot Petition Reduction bill in the 2023 Executive Budget. This bill has been noted as a priority by the New York State Board of Regents, the New York State Library, and the New York Library Association.

The aim of this bill aligns the petition signature requirement for libraries using a municipal ballot approach for their budget proposals (currently requiring 10% of the total number of voters in the last gubernatorial election) with the 25-signature requirement for libraries using a school district ballot approach to place a proposition on the ballot.

In our System, several libraries are exploring the municipal ballot option to secure adequate funding, alleviate the reliance on municipal appropriations, eliminate instances of double taxation, and support voter-directed funding for their institutions. The current 10% petition barrier prevents many of them from taking the initial step in solidifying their local funding.

Whether 25 individuals sign a petition or 500, all voters can voice their opinions on Election Day. This legislation will help libraries continue to support the millions of New Yorkers they are chartered to serve. We urge the Governor to include this election reform in the 2023 budget.

Sincerely,

Ronald Kirsop  
Executive Director  
OWWL Library System