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leading libraries forward

LIBRARY ADVOCACY 2022

STATE LIBRARY AID BUDGET REQUEST: \$123.1M

Library Aid Program:

Funds are allocated each year within the New York State budget for each library type and system use. In our System, State Aid primarily supports delivery between libraries, Continuing Education, Outreach services, automation, and coordination of online collections.

Where We Were:

- State Library Aid in the FY 2021-2022 enacted budget was \$94.1M.
- Nominal increases to State Aid had been given to libraries leading up to 2000.
- A steady decline occurred until 2007 when Library Aid was fully funded under Education Law for the first and only time.
- New York's libraries have struggled to secure adequate increases in funding for the last 14 years.

Where We Are:

- New York State Education Law calls for \$102.6M in State Library Aid for FY 2021-2022.
- More than \$125M in statutory State Library Aid has been withheld since FY 2007-2008.
- Persistent underfunding has disenfranchised millions of vulnerable New Yorkers who lack access to information resources and trusted, community-based information professionals.
- Libraries have incurred thousands of dollars of expenditures to operate safely during the ongoing pandemic.

Where We Should Be:

- If fully funded, our library System and member libraries can expand services to ensure all patrons in Ontario, Wyoming, Wayne, and Livingston Counties have access to in-person, digital, and remote library services.

LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION AID BUDGET REQUEST: \$45M

Library Construction Aid Program:

Funds are allocated annually in the State Budget for public library and library system construction, renovation, rehabilitation, and/or acquisition of new space. Other eligible or unique projects include broadband installation, emergency generators, and security systems.

Where We Were:

- In 2021, \$34 million was allocated to the Library Construction State Aid Program.
- Last year's investment came in the wake of a detrimental \$20 million reduction in 2020.

Where We Are:

- New York State's public library buildings are rapidly aging.
- Over half of the libraries in our System are over 50 years old.
- The most recent available data provided by the New York State Education documents an existing \$1.5B in capital needs statewide.

Where We Should Be:

- Increased investment would allow public libraries to maintain and develop their physical infrastructure to ensure they are safe and accessible for everyone.
- Expanded budgets mean expanded spaces and programs that promote literacy, creativity, civic engagement, and educated communities.

PIONEER LIBRARY SYSTEM GOALS 2022

Outreach to Communities

- Books by Mail Program – Bringing books to homebound individuals in rural communities.
- One Book, OWWL Kids – Community read initiative for families.
- Backpack Program – School supplies for low-income communities.

Support for Libraries

- Assistive Technologies – Supporting access to library services for patrons with disabilities.
- Trustee Education – Supporting Trustees following the Trustee Training Bill (S4435B/A6121B)
- Summer Library Symposium – One-day conference for small libraries to discuss future initiatives, supporting communities, and services in small and rural communities.