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Why Advocacy Matters

Building an effective advocacy network requires ongoing efforts by library staff, boards, and supporters. Every day library advocates are called on to speak up about the value of libraries and help decision-makers understand how important libraries are to their community. Public libraries advocate to ensure that they have the resources they need to provide high-quality services to the community.

Both your library and SALS depend upon state taxpayer-based funding. NYS Library Aid is allocated each year based on Education Law formulas. State funding comprises 94% of SALS funding, and the infrastructure SALS provides to enable 34 libraries to share resources and costs they cannot afford individually. The SALS 2018 budget is based on a 6.4334% cut from full funding as required by law.

2018 Legislative Priorities

Increase State Library Aid Proportionally with Increases in Education Funding

New York State Education Law contemplates State Library Aid for FY 2018-2019 to be $102.6M, based on the most recent census data. Total funding in last year’s enacted budget was $95.9M. This places library aid at 2006 funding levels.

More than $118M in contemplated statutory State Library Aid has been withheld since FY2007-2008.

Increase Investment in State Library Aid Construction Program to $30M

The most recent available data provided by the New York State Education Department’s Division of Library Development (DLD) articulates an existing $1.7B in needed capital investment statewide.
State funding for the public library capital program remained stagnant for a decade prior to recent investment; the accumulated capital needs forced the sale of library buildings and has eroded operating funds for maintenance.

The Public Library Capital Aid Program provides an immediate and efficient return on investment while boosting local economies; since 2007, state investment has leveraged more than $500M in local funding—a 5:1 return.

Without immediate, significant state investment to accommodate advances in technological infrastructure, make investments in energy efficiency, and increase access to differently-abled patrons.

Equitable Access to School Libraries and Librarians
Currently, elementary schools are not required to be staffed by a certified School Library Media Specialist, while secondary schools are only required to do so by Commissioner’s Education Regulations. Many school districts disregard the Commissioner’s regulations; the NYC Department of Education previously sought a waiver from this requirement.

Taxpayer Access to Publicly-Funded Research
This legislation requires New York State funded research published in peer-reviewed journals be made available online by the state agencies that underwrite such research. This bill would bring NYS in line with the federal standards employed by the National Institute of Health and the State of California.

Provide Universal Access to DASNY Financing for Public Libraries
This legislation would make all public libraries eligible for public financing through the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York. Currently, any library not yet eligible by law for DASNY funding must individually be added to the statutory list of approved institutions.
For more information visit:
http://tinyurl.com/jjgtzkk

Advocacy Checklist

Advocacy is a year round activity, make sure you keep in contact with your local officials to build positive working relationships with them.
- Add your legislators to your mailing list
- Follow them on Facebook and hope they follow your library in return. Share their posts and post on their wall. On Twitter start a conversation or give them “shout outs”; on Instagram don’t forget to #hashtag
- Invite them to visit you in person for a library tour or an event. Make sure there are a lot of people expected to attend the event for photo opportunities. A Summer Reading event is often the perfect opportunity since the legislative session normally concludes in early July.
- Join SALS at the Library Advocacy Day in Albany to meet with your legislators in person. SALS provides limited free transportation to this annual event held in February or March.
- Document and celebrate how essential your library is with Snapshot Day in February.
- Write/call legislators a few times each year and always send thank you notes when you get a response.
- Post a “Contact your Officials” button and “Library Value Calculator” on your website and Facebook during legislative alerts
- Join the NYLA Action E-list to receive timely alerts about email campaigns when libraries need support
- Get the local media involved: Write letters to the editor (trustees too) and ask the paper to support libraries with an editorial.
- Use the PLA Project Outcomes results to tell your story.
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<th>Senate District</th>
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<td>Round Lake Library</td>
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* Clifton Park Halfmoon and Saratoga Springs Public Libraries service area is split into two districts.
New York State Assembly
http://assembly.state.ny.us/

District 107
Currently Vacant

Libraries in District Cambridge Public Library

District 108:
Assemblyman John T. McDonald (Democrat)
McDonaldJ@nyassembly.gov

President of Marra’s Pharmacy in Cohoes. Earned his BS in Pharmaceutical Sciences and awarded a Doctorate of Humanity.

Committees: Subcommittee on Effective Treatment, Chair. Also sits on Committees of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Higher Education, Ways and Means, Aging, Cities and Real Property Tax Issues

Priorities: Local government, healthcare, and small business; as well as working on the issues that affect households across our state including taxes, jobs, education, and healthcare.

Year elected: 2012

Libraries in District Waterford Public Library

Local Office (none)
Local Phone (none)
Albany Office LOB 417, Albany, NY 12248
Albany Phone (518) 455-4474
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/JohnTMcDonaldIII
Twitter @johnmcdonald108
District 112
Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh (Republican)
walshm@nyassembly.gov

She has been a practicing attorney for more than 25 years, most recently served as Saratoga Assistant County Attorney, and the Town of Edinburg Attorney.

Committees: Aging, Children and Families, Education, Libraries and Education Technology, Local Governments, Mental Health, Woman’s Caucus

Priorities: Ethics reform, tax cuts, de-regulation, financial aid, education reform, children, middle-class

Year elected: 2016

Libraries in District Ballston Spa Public Library, Town of Ballston Community Library, Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library, Galway Public Library, Saratoga Springs Public Library

Local Office 199 Milton Ave, Suite 3-4 Ballston Spa, NY 12020
Local Phone (518) 884-8010
Albany Office LOB 725, Albany, NY 12248
Albany Phone (518) 455-5772
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/marybethforassembly

District 113

Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner (Democrat)
woernerc@nyassembly.gov

Software Industry. Earned her MBA

Committees: Chairs, Subcommittee on Agriculture Production and Technology. Sits on Committee on Agriculture, Local Governments, Racing and Waging,

Priorities: Agriculture, Women’s rights, environment/sustainability, education, veterans

Year elected: 2014

Libraries in District Argyle Free Library, Easton Library, Fort Edward Free Library, Greenwich Free Library, Hudson Falls Free Library, Round Lake Library and Malta Branch, Mechanicville District Public Library, Bancroft Public Library, Saratoga Springs Public Library, Southern Adirondack Library System (headquarters), Schuylerville Public Library, Stillwater Free Library

Local Office 112 Spring Street, Suite 205 Saratoga Springs 12866
Local Phone (518) 584-5493
Albany Office LOB 323, Albany, NY 12248
Albany Phone (518) 455-5404
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/carrie.woerner
Twitter @AMCarrieWoerner

District 114
Assemblyman Dan Stec (Republican)
StecD@nyassembly.gov

Public servant/Veteran. BS in Chemical Engineering, MBA

Committees: Consumer Affairs, Education, Environmental Conservation, Local Governments, Social Services, Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports Development.

Priorities: Environment, Tourism, Ethics, Education reform, Job growth, Veterans, 2nd Amendment protection, Gun-owner rights

Year elected: 2012

Local Offices 140 Glen Street, Glens Falls 12801/7559 Court St. Rm 203, Elizabethtown 12932
Local Phone (518) 792-4546/ (518) 873-3803
Albany Office LOB 940, Albany, NY 12248
Albany Phone (518) 455-5565
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/AssemblymanDanStec
Twitter @danstec

District 118
Assemblyman Marc W. Butler (Republican)
ButlerM@nyassembly.gov

Communications. BA in English


Priorities: Job growth, Agriculture, Education, 2nd Amendment protection, Gun-owner rights

Year elected: 2002

Libraries in District Town of Indian Lake Public Library, Town of Inlet Public Library, Town of Lake Pleasant Public Library, CVW Long Lake Public Library, Raquette Lake Free Library

Local Offices 33-41 E. Main Street, Johnstown 12095/235 North Prospect St, Herkimer 13350
Local Phone (518) 762-9871/(315) 866-1632
Albany Office LOB 525, Albany, NY 12248
Albany Phone (518) 455-5393
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/AssemblymanButler
New York State Senate

http://nysenate.gov

District 43:
Senator Kathleen A. Marchione (Republican, Conservative, Independence Party)
marchione@nysenate.gov
Public Servant, Saratoga County Clerk.


Priorities: Small businesses, tax relief, protection of the 2nd amendment, reforming state government, veterans, education, farmers/agriculture, private sector job creation, heroin and opioid abuse and addiction.

Year elected: 2012

Libraries in District Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library, Easton Library, Mechanicville District Public Library, Saratoga Springs Public Library, Southern Adirondack Library Systems (Headquarters), Schuylerville Public Library, Stillwater Free Library, Waterford Public Library

Local Office 1 Halfmoon Town Plaza, Halfmoon 12065
Local Phone (518) 371-2753
Albany Office LOB 917, Albany, NY 12248
Albany Phone (518) 455-2381
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/Marchione2012
Twitter @kathymarchione
District 45:
Senator Betty Little (Republican, Conservative, Independence Party)
little@nysenate.gov
Educator, Real Estate. Elementary Education, College of St. Rose


Priorities: Consolidation of services, reform possession laws, invasive species, Adirondack Community Housing Trust, Timber Theft Law, Renewable energy, and veterans.

Year elected: 2002


Local Office 5 Warren Street, Suite 3, Glens Falls 12801
Local Phone (518) 743-0968
Albany Office LOB 310, Albany, NY 12248
Albany Phone (518) 455-2811
Facebook www.facebook.com/SenatorBettyLittle
Twitter @bettylittle
District 49:
Senator James Tedisco (Republican, Conservative)
tedisco@nysenate.gov
Educator. B.A. in Psychology, Graduate degree in Special Education

Committees: Social Services (Chair), Banks, Codes, Environmental Conservation, Health, Crime Victims, Crime and Corrections, Elections, Libraries, Heroin Task Force, Task Force on Workforce Development

Priorities: Animal cruelty, tax cap, farming industry, environment/sustainability, driver safety, children safety, government reforms

Year elected: 1982, Minority Leader 2005-2009 (Assembly), 2016 Senate

Libraries in District Ballston Spa Public Library, Town of Ballston Community Library, Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library, Corinth Free Library, Galway Public Library, Town of Inlet Public Library, Town of Indian Lake Public Library, Town of Lake Pleasant Public Library, CVW Long Lake Public Library, Round Lake Library and Malta Branch, Raquette Lake Free Library, Saratoga Springs Public Library

Local Office 636 Plank Road, Suite 101, Clifton Park 12065 (temporary)
Local Phone (518) 885-1829
Albany Office LOB 803, Albany, NY 12248
Albany Phone (518) 455-2181
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/JamesTedisco/
Twitter @JamesTedisco
Governor Andrew M. Cuomo (Democrat)
https://www.governor.ny.gov/
Lawyer. Juris Doctor degree

Priorities: Education, Energy, Protecting NY Workers

Year Elected: 2010

Office NYS State Capitol Building, Albany 12224
Phone (518) 474-8390
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/GovernorAndrewCuomo
Twitter @NYGovCuomo

Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul

Lawyer. Juris Doctor degree

Year Elected: 2014

Office NYS State Capitol Building, Albany 12224
Phone (518) 474-8390
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/Ltgovhochulny
Twitter @LtGovHochulNY

United States Representatives

Kristen Gillibrand (Democrat)
http://www.gillibrand.senate.gov/

Elise Stefanick (Republican)
https://stefanik.house.gov/
Chuck Schumer (Democrat)
http://www.schumer.senate.gov/

County Legislature

Hamilton County Board of Supervisors
Saratoga County Board of Supervisors
Warren County Board of Supervisors

Washington County Board of Supervisors
Protocols for Meeting with Legislators

1. Be on Time and Prepared
Legislators are busier than most folks and often have multiple appointments and time commitments in a day. Being prompt allows you more time with the legislator to get your points across. Being prepared is essential to getting your message across; rehearse ahead of time what you are going to say, bring materials from NYLA’s website, and information available from other reliable sources that backs up your statements. If you have any questions about what to say or how to say it, please do not hesitate to email or call NYLA’s Executive Director at director@nyla.org or (518) 432-6952.

2. First Impressions
The first thing you should say is “thank you” for being a library supporter. Most legislators are part of the silent majority that support libraries, or have given member items to local libraries or supported increased funding for schools. The purpose of the advocacy is to get them to convert their silent support into a more active and visible role, like speaking up in conference (meetings with their fellow senators or assemblymembers of the same political party) or writing letters to their legislative leadership (i.e., the speaker or majority leader).

3. Roles of Advocates
If you are going to see a legislator with a group of colleagues, try to bring a diverse group of constituents, i.e., public, school, academic library personnel. Someone should be appointed to be the meeting facilitator, who speaks first, introduces folks, designates certain members to speak on particular issues of expertise and wraps up the meeting. Another advocate should be designated the note taker, who records what happened at the meeting and the legislator’s response. This person should also record any additional information that needs to be sent to the legislator or follow-up taken by NYLA.

4. Meeting Tone
Advocates are there to educate legislators about the issues and not to berate or lecture them. Remember that honey always works better than vinegar. You want to educate...
them about the lack of adequate state funding for libraries and what that means to their local public libraries, library systems, school libraries and academic/research libraries. Never get belligerent or angry. You can express frustration and disappointment at the lack of proper funding for libraries, but do not get mad at the legislator.

5. Stay on Message

Many legislators like to talk about their involvement with libraries, or how they know someone involved in libraries, and that is fine and can be helpful if you are able to make a personal connection with the legislator (i.e., legislator’s cousin works in your library or their son is a student in member’s school, etc.). However, do not let too much of your limited meeting time be used to talk about these pleasantries. You need to bring the conversation politely back to your message of wanting the legislator to take action in support of additional funding for libraries.

6. Leave on a Positive Note

As you wrap up the conversation, make sure you repeat one last time what action you hope the legislator will take and then thank them for meeting with you and their past support for libraries. Also make sure you leave them any written material you brought that backs up you point of view.

7. Follow-Up

Follow-up is key to successful grassroots advocacy efforts. The meeting facilitator should send a thank you note to the legislator for meeting with them and include any additional information the legislator requested. A record of the meeting should be sent to NYLA’s Executive Director (director@nyla.org) for follow-up in Albany, so we know which Legislators have already been spoken to and who needs further attention.

New York Library Association

6021 State Farm Road

Guilderland, NY 12084

March 3 2018
Assembly Member
Room 123 LOB
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Assembly Member,
Thank you for taking the time to meet with our group of library supporters on Library Advocacy Day, February 28th 2018. We appreciate the interest and the feedback that you were able to provide. We know that you are facing the very difficult challenge of getting New York moving forward on a stable fiscal platform, and we want you to know that New York’s libraries and library systems are now, and will continue to play, an important role in that process.

We know that you understand that libraries are essential for all New Yorkers for the work they do every day in employment assistance, small business support, early childhood education, and connecting all New Yorkers to the digital world. We know that you appreciate that library systems are the foundation of the network that connects all New York’s libraries to all New Yorkers. We need your help to ensure that libraries and library systems are able to continue to serve as models of resource sharing and collaboration, and that they are supported at realistic and appropriate funding levels.

We urge the Assembly to demonstrate that they value New York’s libraries by advocating for a full restoration of library aid to $102.6 million. We look forward to supporting you and your Assembly colleagues in making a positive difference for libraries in this year’s budget negotiations.

If you have questions or would like to visit any of our member libraries to witness for yourself the transformative work being done in your district every day, please feel free to contact me and I will be happy to make those connections for you.
Thank you for your caring and committed service to your constituents and most of all thank you for your support in our efforts to keep libraries and library systems working for all New Yorkers.

Sincerely,

Generic Thank You Letter (Senate Bullet Aid)
November 10, 2018

Senator
Room 123 LOB
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the [library name], I want to thank you for providing $[amount] of funding via FY2018-19 Bullet Aid.

This funding recognizes the important role that [library name] plays in our community, from helping people to find jobs to offering free cultural programs and reading materials to families looking to save money.

Your support demonstrates that your understanding that the library serves as a cornerstone of the community, and that it can continue to thrive only if provided with adequate funding.

We look forward to working with you during the 2018 Legislative Session to advance the library community across New York State.

Sincerely yours,

Your Name

Title
Advocacy Resources

New York State
   NYLA Action E-List Signup
   Protect NY Libraries
   New Yorkers for Better Libraries
   New York Library Association: Advocacy

National
   Public Library Association: Turning the Page
   American Library Association: Advocacy and Legislation
   Cultivating Your Local Notables Toolkit
   Frontline Advocacy Toolkit

Libraries Change Lives
   EveryLibrary.org
   ILoveLibraries.org
   GeektheLibrary.org

Organizations
   New York Library Association
   Library Trustee Association
   United for Libraries