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WHY ADVOCACY MATTERS

Libraries are essential to New Yorkers. From early literacy to workforce development to civic engagement New York’s libraries are empowerment engines.

If you don’t speak up for libraries who will? Legislators need to hear from their constituents, so they understand what matters to them. If no one speaks up to let legislators know that libraries are making a positive difference in our communities, they cannot justify spending their time advocating for library aid and legislation.

Modern, sustainable library service depends on state aid. State aid accounts for 75% of the Mid-Hudson Library System’s operating budget. These are funds that are leveraged on behalf of the sixty-six (66) member libraries and therefore the communities served in our region.

System services enable every library in the region to offer relevant, effective and efficient services:

- Shared online catalog that facilitates access for all patrons to over 3 million items
- A delivery service that saves libraries over $4.5 million annually
- 21st Century library services such as e-books, downloadable audiobooks, e-magazines and online classes
According to the State Education Department (SED), each dollar invested in the State Library Aid program returns seven dollars in local library services; more than $118 million in lost state funding has cost our communities more than $800 million in lost local library services.

$200 million for Equitable Library Funding

- New York State Education Law sets State Library Aid at $102.6 million for FY 2019-2020
- State Library Aid in the FY2019-20 enacted budget was $96.6 million, placing library aid at 2008 funding levels.
- More than $130 million in contemplated statutory State Library Aid has been withheld since FY2007-2008.

$75 million for State Aid for Library Construction

- Public libraries require immediate, significant state investment to accommodate advances in technological infrastructure, make investments in energy efficiency, and increase access to differently abled patrons
- The New York State Education Department’s Division of Library Development (DLD) has identified $1.5 billion in capital needs statewide
- The State Aid for Library Construction 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
- Funding for the Public Library Capital Aid 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

For more information: http://bit.ly/1T0FQmM
2020 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

**Equitable Access to School Libraries and Librarians**

Current law denies primary students their basic right to instruction in information sciences. Secondary students often lack competent instruction due to easily circumvented SED regulations. Inadequate instruction in information sciences diminishes college-readiness, restricts career opportunities in the modern economy, and dissuades meaningful participation in civic life.

**Impact:** This legislation provides a long-overdue guarantee that all students have access to a quality school library staffed by a certified NYS School Library Media Specialist.

**Training for Library Trustees**

Library trustees play an important role in the success and long-term growth of their libraries. Their actions effect policy, personnel and finances. Currently, the state does not require library trustees to obtain any formal training.

**Impact:** Passage of this bill would ensure that those choosing to serve their libraries as a trustee, have the comprehensive and necessary information to be successful.
ADVOCACY CHECKLIST

☐ Get to know your state legislators. Keep reading for legislator profiles and visit http://bit.ly/1MG5XwR for more info.

☐ Make sure you are connected with your state legislators:
  o Annually invite them to your library
  o Introduce yourself at public events
  o Add them to your library’s mailing list
  o Follow them on social media (Facebook & Twitter)
  o Subscribe to their mailing list


☐ Participate in the Real People. Real Dollars. Campaign to help tell the story of how libraries positively impact household budgets in your community. For more information: https://midhudson.org/real-people-real-dollars/

☐ Use Project Outcome to tell the story of your library:
  https://projectoutcome.org/

☐ Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper explaining why your library is essential to your community.

# NYS Legislative Districts by Library

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<th>Library</th>
<th>Senate District: Senator</th>
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<td>Amenia Free Library</td>
<td>41: Senator Susan Serino</td>
<td>106: Assemblymember Didi Barrett</td>
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<td>43: Senator Daphne Jordan</td>
<td>107: Jake Ashby</td>
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<td>46: Senator George Amedore</td>
<td>102: Chris Tague</td>
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<td>39: Senator James Skoufis</td>
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<td>43: Senator Daphne Jordan</td>
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<td>51: Senator James L. Seward</td>
<td>103: Assemblymember Kevin A. Cahill</td>
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<td>51: Senator James L. Seward</td>
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<td>Roeliff Jansen Community Library</td>
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<td>Stanford Free Library</td>
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<td>Starr Library</td>
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<td>102: Chris Tague</td>
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<td>Woodstock Public Library District</td>
<td>46: Senator George Amedore</td>
<td>103: Assemblymember Kevin A. Cahill</td>
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MEET OUR STATE SENATORS

39th District: Senator James Skoufis (D)

Libraries Served:
- Clintondale Branch of Highland Public Library
- Marlboro Free Library
- Sarah Hull Hallock Free Library
- Plattekill Public Library

Select Appointments:
- Chair, Investigations and Government Operations
- Local Government
- Internet and Technology

Learn more: https://www.nysenate.gov/senators/james-skoufis

40th District: Senator Peter Harckham (D, WF)

Libraries Served:
- Beekman Library
- Brewster Public Library
- Reed Memorial Library
- Mahopac Public Library
- Patterson Library
- Pawling Free Library

Select Appointments:
- Chair, Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
- Commerce, Economic Development and Small Business
- Environmental Conservation
- Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs

Learn More: https://www.nysenate.gov/senators/peter-harckham
Libraries Served:

- Amenia Free Library
- Howland Public Library
- Boardman Road Branch Library – Poughkeepsie Public Library District
- Clinton Community Library
- Julia L. Butterfield Memorial Library
- Dover Plains Library
- East Fishkill Public Library District
- Blodgett Memorial Library
- Desmond-Fish Library
- Hyde Park Free Library
- Kent Public Library
- LaGrange Association Library
- Millbrook Library
- NorthEast-Millerton Library
- Pine Plains Free Library
- Pleasant Valley Library
- Adriance Memorial Library – Poughkeepsie Public Library District
- Putnam Valley Free Library
- Red Hook Public Library
- Starr Library
- Morton Memorial Library and Community House (Rhinecliff)
- Staatsburg Library
- Stanford Free Library
- Tivoli Free Library
- Grinnell Public Library District

Select Appointments:

- Aging
- Social Services
- Children and Families
- Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities

Learn More: https://www.nysenate.gov/senators/sue-serino
42nd District: Senator Jen Metzger (D)

Libraries Served:
- Elting Memorial Library
- Rosendale Library

Select Appointments:
- Chair, Agriculture
- Environmental Conservation
- Education
- Local Government
- Legislative Commission on Rural Resources
- Women's Issues

Learn More: https://www.nysenate.gov/senators/jen-metzger

43rd District: Senator Daphne Jordan (R, C, IP, RFM)

Libraries Served:
- Canaan Branch of Chatham Public Library
- Chatham Public Library
- Claverack Free Library
- Germantown Library
- Roeliff Jansen Community Library
- Hudson Area Association Library
- Kinderhook Memorial Library
- Livingston Free Library
- New Lebanon Library
- North Chatham Free Library
- Philmont Public Library
- Valatie Free Library

Select Appointments:
- Racing, Gaming and Wagering
- State-Native American Relations
- Civil Service and Pensions
- Ethics and Internal Governance

Learn More: https://www.nysenate.gov/senators/daphne-jordan
46th District: Senator George Amedore (R, C, IP)

Libraries Served:
- D.R. Evarts Library
- Cairo Public Library
- Catskill Public Library
- Heermance Memorial Library
- Town of Esopus Library
- Greenville Public Library
- Mountain Top Library
- Highland Public Library
- Hunter Public Library
- Hurley Library
- Kingston Library
- Palenville Branch of Catskill Public Library
- Saugerties Public Library
- Stone Ridge Library
- Town of Ulster Public Library
- West Hurley Public Library
- Windham Public Library
- Woodstock Public Library District

Select Appointments:
- Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities
- Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs
- Higher Education

Learn More: https://www.nysenate.gov/senators/george-amedore-jr

51st District: Senator James L. Seward (R, C, IP, RFM)

Libraries Served:
- Phoenicia Library
- Morton Memorial Library (Pine Hill)
- Olive Free Library Association

Select Appointments:
- Education
- Higher Education
- Finance

Learn More: https://www.nysenate.gov/senator/james-l-seward
MEET OUR STATE ASSEMBLYMEMBERS

**94th District: Assemblymember Kevin M. Byrne (R)**

**Libraries Served:**
- Brewster Public Library
- Reed Memorial Library
- Mahopac Public Library
- Patterson Library
- Putnam Valley Free Library

**Select Appointments:**
- Committee on Labor
- Committee on Governmental Operations
- Committee on Health
- Committee on Transportation


**95th District: Assemblymember Sandy Galef (D)**

**Libraries Served:**
- Julia L. Butterfield Memorial Library
- Desmond-Fish Library
- Kent Public Library

**Select Appointments:**
- Chair, Committee on Real Property Taxation
- Task Force on Women's Issues
- Legislative Women's Caucus
- Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions
- Committee on Election Law
- Committee on Governmental Operations
- Committee on Health

102nd District: Assemblymember Chris Tague (R)

Libraries Served:
- D.R. Evarts Library
- Cairo Public Library
- Catskill Public Library
- Heermance Memorial Library
- Greenville Public Library
- Mountain Top Library
- Hunter Public Library
- Kinderhook Memorial Library
- Palenville Branch of Catskill Public Library
- Saugerties Public Library
- Windham Public Library

Select Appointments:
- Committee on Election Law
- Committee on Environmental Conservation
- Committee on Local Governments
- Committee on Real Property Taxation
- Committee on Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports Development

Learn More: https://nyassembly.gov/mem/Chris-Tague
103rd District: Assemblymember Kevin A. Cahill (D)

Libraries Served:
- Clintondale Branch of Highland Public Library
- Town of Esopus Library
- Hurley Library
- Kingston Library
- Elting Memorial Library
- Phoenicia Library
- Morton Memorial Library (Pine Hill)
- Plattekill Public Library
- Red Hook Public Library
- Starr Library
- Morton Memorial Library and Community House (Rhinecliff)
- Rosendale Library
- Stone Ridge Library
- Tivoli Free Library
- Town of Ulster Public Library
- West Hurley Public Library
- Olive Free Library Association
- Woodstock Public Library District

Select Appointments:
- Chair, Committee on Insurance
- Committee on Higher Education
- Committee on Economic Development, Job Creation, Commerce and Industry
- Committee on Health
- Committee on Ways and Means

104th District: Assemblymember Jonathan G. Jacobson (D)

Libraries Served:
- Adriance Memorial Library – Poughkeepsie Public Library District
- Howland Public Library
- Highland Public Library
- Marlboro Free Library
- Sarah Hull Hallock Free Library

Select Appointments:
- Chair, Subcommittee on Election Day Operations and Voter Disenfranchisement
- Committee on Election Law
- Committee on Cities
- Committee on Local Government
- Committee on Transportation


105th District: Assemblymember Kieran Michael Lalor (R)

Libraries Served:
- Howland Public Library
- Beekman Library
- Dover Plains Library
- East Fishkill Public Library District
- Blodgett Memorial Library
- LaGrange Association Library
- Millbrook Library
- Pawling Free Library
- Grinnell Public Library District*

Select Appointments:
- Committee on Banks
- Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions
- Committee on Economic Development, Job Creation, Commerce and Industry
- Committee on Governmental Operations
- Committee on Small Business

106th District: Assemblymember Didi Barrett (D)

Libraries Served:
- Amenia Free Library
- Boardman Road Branch Library - Poughkeepsie Public Library District
- Claverack Free Library
- Clinton Community Library
- Chatham Public Library
- Germantown Library
- Roeliff Jansen Community Library
- Hudson Area Association Library
- Hyde Park Free Library
- Livingston Free Library
- NorthEast-Millerton Library
- Philmont Public Library
- Pine Plains Free Library
- Pleasant Valley Library
- Staatsburg Library
- Stanford Free Library
- Grinnell Public Library District

Select Appointments:
- Chair, Committee on Veterans' Affairs
- Chair, Legislative Women's Caucus

Learn More: http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/Didi-Barrett

107th District: Assemblymember Jake Ashby (R)

Libraries Served:
- Canaan Branch of Chatham Public Library
- Chatham Public Library
- Roeliff Jansen Community Library
- Kinderhook Memorial Library
- New Lebanon Library
- North Chatham Free Library
- Valatie Free Library

Select Appointments:
- Committee on Higher Education
- Committee on Veterans' Affairs

Learn More: https://nyassembly.gov/mem/Jake-Ashby
PROTOCOLS FOR MEETING WITH LEGISLATORS

1. Be on Time and Be 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 the New York Library Association’s website [http://www.nyla.org], 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 MHLS Executive Director Rebekkah Smith Aldrich: rsmith@midhudson.org; 845.471.6060 ext. 239 or MHLS Library Sustainability Coordinator Casey Conlin: cconlin@midhudson.org; 845.471.6060 ext. 260

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 special legislative grants to local libraries or supported increased funding for schools. The purpose of advocacy is to help them be an active and visible supporter of libraries, for example, encourage them to speak up in conference (meetings with their fellow senators or assemblymembers of the same political party) or ask them to write 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 MHLs or NYLA.

4. Meeting Tone

Advocates are there to educate legislators about the issues and not to berate or lecture them. You want to educate them about the lack of adequate state funding for libraries and what that means to their community. 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. 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 library funding.

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 your 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 via their Advocacy Meeting Reporting Form: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NYLA-Advocacy-MTG for follow-up in Albany, so they know which Legislators have already been spoken to and who needs further attention.
Date

Assemblymember
Room 123 LOB
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Assemblymember,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with our group of library supporters on Library Advocacy Day, February 25, 2020. 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 an increase of library aid to $200 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 our library 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,
Date

Hon. First Name Last Name
District Office
City, State Zip code

Dear Senator/Assemblymember:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of [your library’s name], I want to thank you for providing [$ amount] of funding via the FY2020-21 Special Legislative Grant.

This funding will lead to [programs, longer hours, etc]. This funding recognizes the critical role that [your library’s name] plays in our community. As you know, the services [insert your library’s name] provides [insert program details and/or particular strengths of your library] are indispensable to our children, families and seniors. The increased aid you provided will allow us to continue providing the services on which our neighbors have come to depend.

We look forward to working with you during the 2020 Legislative Session to continue advancing the library community in your district and across the state.

Sincerely yours,
ADVOCA CY RESOURCES

- **Mid-Hudson Library System’s Advocacy Page:**
  http://midhudson.org/topics/sustainable-libraries/advocacy/

- **Online Advocacy Center** [New York Library Association]:
  http://bit.ly/1LwV3Ex

- **Advocacy University** [American Library Association]:
  http://www.alal.org/advocacy/advocacy-public-policy

- **Project Outcome** [Public Library Association]:
  https://projectoutcome.org/