



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

STEVE HAWLEY
Deputy Minority Leader
139th District

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February 10, 2020

Honorable Carl E. Heastie
Speaker NYS Assembly
Room 932 LOB
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Speaker Heastie:

We would like to take this opportunity to communicate our concerns on behalf of our constituents regarding funding for libraries.

The proposed Executive Budget, again, shows an inequity between educational institutions and libraries. Although we saw an increase in library construction grants last year, we are not where we need to be in regard to adequately providing a wide variety of services. In addition, according to libraries in my district, New York State Education Law requires Library Aid for FY 2020-21 to be \$102.6 million, based on the most recent census data. The current level, a reduction of \$5 million, at \$91.6 million, places library aid below 2000 funding levels! This level of state aid is inadequate for libraries within this state and there are no other educational institutions expected to function at this level of state aid. It is imperative that increases in library aid are made each year in proportion to the general education funding. As you know, library monies in the budget are not in line with education funding – it is separate therefore, libraries are not recipients of those increases.

There should be no barrier when it comes to providing our constituents with the essential tools necessary for their betterment. Our constituents, who range from toddlers to the elderly, depend significantly on the services provided by our libraries. In addition, access to resources for job training, start-up businesses, consumer health, education, financial and technology training come from our libraries. We are sure you would agree that each and every New Yorker should be afforded equal access to these services.

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Library Funding

We, together, take a strong stance and urge an increase to replicate the same as education funding. It is imperative, that we receive the same consideration, so that the needs of our mutual constituents will be met.

On behalf of all deserving New York State residents, the undersigned members of the NYS Assembly urge you to consider our request for aid to libraries. We implore you to restore the necessary library aid so desperately needed for the many individuals who utilize these services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Hawley", written in a cursive style.

STEVE HAWLEY
Member of Assembly
139th District

SMH:cag