



2017 BUDGET PRIORITY – LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION AID

Increase Funding for the Public Library Capital Aid Program to \$25M

Background:

- The most recent available data provided by the New York State Education Department's Division of Library Development (DLD) articulates an existing \$2.2B in needed capital investment statewide
- State funding for the public library capital program remained stagnant for nearly a decade at \$14M prior to a nominal \$5M increase in the FY2016-17 enacted state budget
- Without immediate, significant state investment public libraries remain unable to accommodate advances in technological infrastructure, make investments in energy-efficiency, or increase access to differently-abled patrons

Messaging:

- **Public Library infrastructure is rapidly aging**
 - Over 48% of local public libraries are more than 60 years old; an additional 33% are more than 30 years old
 - Over 24% are not accessible to differently-abled patrons
- **Public Libraries require capital investment to accommodate high-speed broadband infrastructure**
 - Underinvestment disproportionately impacts historically underserved populations and economically disadvantaged communities, widening the digital divide
 - A January 2015 Siena poll found that for 33% of African-American and Latino respondents, and 25% of households making less than \$50,000 annually, the public library is their **primary source of internet access**;
- **Public Libraries desperately require energy-efficient infrastructure upgrades**
 - Library use has surged statewide among all demographics, leading to longer hours and increased energy costs
 - Libraries in economically disadvantaged communities cannot afford basic investment in energy-efficient upgrades; increased operating costs have forced shorter hours, reduced staffing, and reduced programming
- **The Public Library Capital Aid matching program boosts local economies**
 - Since 2006, state investment in this program has leveraged \$460M in local funding – a nearly 5:1 return
- **Public Library capital needs have been comparatively underfunded**
 - Public schools: \$2.3B, five-year capital investment (Library Capital Aid = 4.1%)
 - Higher Education: \$3.2B, five-year capital investment in SUNY & CUNY
 - State Parks: \$900M, five-year capital commitment to fully address \$1B in deferred maintenance
 - NYC Budget: \$300M, five-year capital commitment to public libraries