

## **PLEASE CONTACT YOUR NYS ASSEMBLYMAN AND SENATOR!**

### **The following are possible points for communicating our concern over proposed cuts in NYS Library Aid:**

- Governor Patterson proposes an \$18 million (equivalent to 18%) cut in library funding in his recently released budget for 2009/10
- Library Aid would drop from \$102 million in 2007 to \$80.5 million in 2009, a level not seen since 1993.
- We understand that New York State is in serious trouble and that everyone needs to share in the solution. However, this proposed cut is disproportionate to cuts being made to other programs.
- Libraries have already contributed their fair share toward reducing the state's budget deficit. Between 1998-2006, libraries and library systems received no NYS funding increases, while other educational institutions received generous increases. When increases were finally received in 2006 and 2007, they were not permanent, but rather were considered supplementary and one time only. They did not make up for eight years of neglect and inflation.
- In difficult times, libraries are needed more than ever. Library use is up dramatically in every community across the state. The neediest in our communities use our libraries to get help writing resumes, applying for jobs, taking ESL and literacy classes, and accessing government assistance programs. As families' budgets decline, their use of library resources for entertainment increases. In over 73% of communities, the library is the only source of free internet service according to a recent poll by the American Library Association.
- Although much of the NYS library funding goes to library systems, system services are essential to local libraries. Libraries rely heavily on their systems in order to serve their communities well.
- Cutting funding for library systems is counterproductive. The library community has long been a champion and role model for regional cooperation, resource sharing and providing services in a cost-effective and efficient manner. These are things the Legislature and Governor claim to value.
- No other state funded program serves so many people (over 75% of New York households and getting bigger) with so little state funding (less than one tenth of one percent of the state budget and getting smaller).
- Library Aid accounts for only 1/10 of 1 percent of the state budget. Cutting libraries by 18% is not going to make an appreciable dent in the state's financial situation.