

# Library Advocacy Guide

*2018*



1300 Dryden Rd., Ithaca, New York 14850

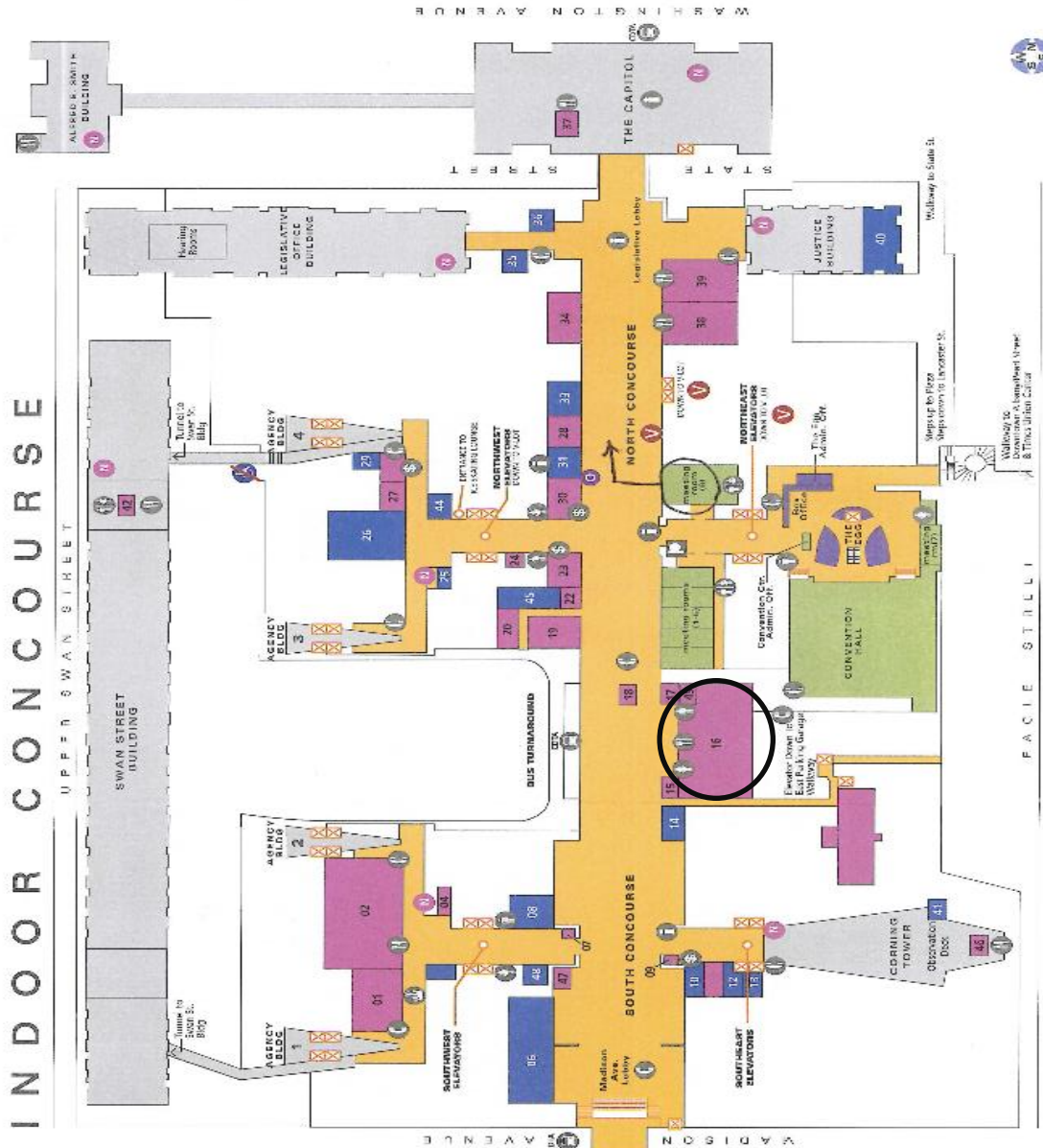
(607) 273-4074 • (800) 909-3557

[www.flls.org/advocacy](http://www.flls.org/advocacy)



**KEY:**

- PUBLIC CORRIDORS**
  - CONVENTION CENTER
    - Convention Hall
    - Meeting Rooms 1-7
    - Administrative Office
  - THE EGG
    - Administrative Office
    - Box Office
    - Hart Theatre
    - Swyer Theatre
  - RETAIL/FOOD
    - YMCA
    - Paradise Cafeteria
    - Sassy Wizard Hair Styling
    - Salway
    - NeaGan Wireless
    - Just Jewelry Repair
    - McDonald's/Sandwiches
    - Plaza Food Court Cafeteria
    - Hutch House Bakery (Starbucks)
    - Link Street Flower Market
    - Scott's Hallmark
    - Amorant Red Cross
    - Plaintiff Land Express
    - Citizens Bank
    - Gift Family Dental Practice
    - 357-CU Credit Union
    - Key Bank
    - Legislative Gazette
    - Capito Dell Cafeteria
    - Liberty Market Galleria
    - Albany Room Restaurant
    - Swan Street Grill
    - 25th Floor Cafe
    - African Reflections
    - Sodexo Catering Office
  - STATE OFFICES
    - NY Network Broadcast Ctr.
    - OGS Plaza Manager, Cultural Events
    - Post Office
    - Employed Health Services
    - OGS Conference Room
    - New York State Police
    - NYS Deferred Compensation Plan
    - DFT Telecommunications
    - Empire State College
    - PLAZA VISITOR CENTER & LOVE NY INFORMATION
    - Employee Assistance Program
    - NYS Assembly Payroll & Travel Unit
    - NYS Assembly Human Resources
    - Vietnam Gallery
    - Observation Deck
    - Department of State Fire Prevention and Control
    - CSEA Local 680
    - OGS Food Service Office
- Other Icons:**
  - Information
  - ATM
  - Phones
  - Elevators
  - Escalator
  - Restrooms
  - Dining
  - Vending Machine
  - Paratilities Cafeteria
  - Sassy Wizard Hair Styling
  - Salway
  - NeaGan Wireless
  - Just Jewelry Repair
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  - African Reflections
  - Sodexo Catering Office





[www.empirestateplaza.org](http://www.empirestateplaza.org)



Thank you to those who are attending Advocacy Day with us! ♥ ♥ ♥

Library Aid funding is essential to the future of our libraries, and meeting with our legislators is a critical step in winning them as our allies.

## **BASIC LOGISTICS FOR ADVOCACY DAY:**

### **1. Plan for airport-like security measures between the concourse and meetings with legislators in the Capitol and LOB**

- Long lines can spring up without warning! Allow at least 30-45 minutes to enter the LOB and/or the Capitol. You do not need to pass through security to switch between the LOB and the Capitol.
- Metal detectors and bag x-rays will be required.
- Photo ID required for 16+ adults.
- Sharp objects/weapons will be confiscated – leave them on the bus!

### **2. LOB120 (aka NYLA headquarters)**

There have been some changes to the locations. Room 6 *might* be available to hang your coat, but the bus will be locked so it is recommended that you leave anything you do not need on the bus. We'll stop here first thing to pick up our NYLA packets to give to legislators.

### **3. Lunch**

Everyone will get a lunch break. If you would like to purchase a lunch, there are two cafeterias in the concourse, as well as sandwich/snack vending machines in the LOB/Capitol. **Be sure to allow 45 minutes to pass through security for your afternoon meetings.** Lines after lunch can sometimes take up to an hour!

### **4. Departure**

Please go to the food court (#16) immediately after the last meeting. We'll depart as close to 2:30pm as possible. If you are delayed for any reason or run into other logistical issues, please call Kristi. Buses have a very short window to pick people up, and we need to mobilize everyone on board quickly so that we get home by a reasonable hour!

***If you have questions or need help/advice today, please call:***

**Kristi's Cell: 607-592-2566**

**Jenny's Cell: 607-345-6202**

**Sarah's Cell: 607-280-3047**

## **MEETING WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS:**

1. See the schedule for your scheduled meetings. If you have time, please join other meetings on the schedule if you can! (There are several exceptions to this. Check with Kristi before attending a meeting you aren't scheduled for.)
2. FLLS and NYLA have both prepared packets to deliver to legislators (we'll pick up the NYLA packets in Meeting Room 6). The starred person in each meeting group is in charge of delivering the packets.
3. Before your meetings please review:
  - The biographical information and legislative priorities for each legislator that you are meeting with.
  - The 2018 legislative agenda & talking points.
  - Our lobbying and storytelling tips.
4. Sometimes legislators are called into session, and your meeting will then be with their staff. If this happens, please proceed as usual -- the aide can still pass on your concerns to the legislator.
5. **If you have business cards, please bring them!** They will save you time so that you don't have to fill out information at each meeting.

## **OUR PRIMARY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY:**

1. The last few years of restoration have been a welcome change from the six massive cuts we suffered 2008-2011. However, State Library Aid in the FY2017-18 enacted budget was \$95.9M, placing library aid at 2006 funding levels, and with the proposed cuts it will be even lower. **According to NYS Education Law libraries should be receiving \$102.6M.**

The basic message we want to communicate to our legislators is:

- Additional cuts would be devastating.
- Funding for libraries is **ESSENTIAL** and **CRITICAL**.
- The current funding levels are roughly equivalent to 2006 levels and are not sustainable.
- The NYS Public Library Construction Grant Program needs increased funding to \$30M, not to be cut back to \$14M.
- Talking points and data to help you make your case are included in the following pages, as well as NYLA's general legislative agenda.



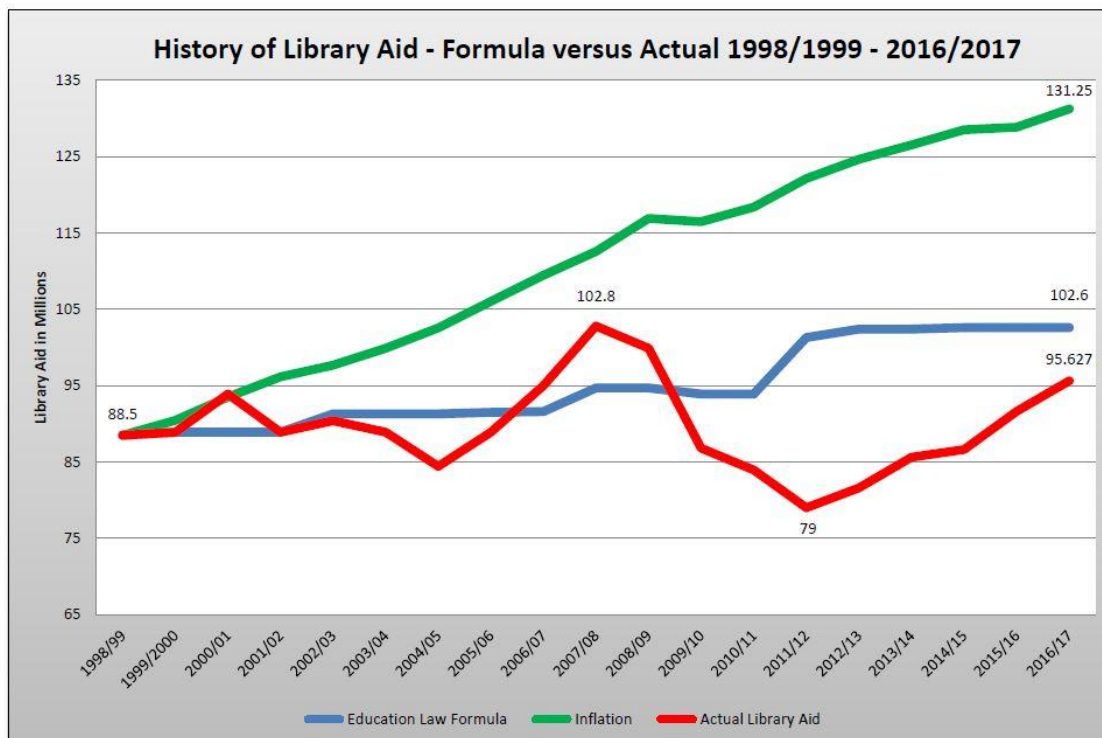
# FLLS's 2018 Advocacy Talking Points

## A. A brief history of NYS library funding:

Between 1998-2006, library systems received no state funding increases, while other educational institutions received generous increases. When economic conditions worsened, libraries were then the first to receive cuts. **Between 2008-2011, Library Aid suffered six dramatic cuts — a 23% reduction!** In comparison, school aid dropped only 2% during the same period.

Small restorations for the past 4 years were a step in the right direction, but we still have a long way to go. **Library Aid remains at 2006 levels, which is unsustainable. Our libraries need adequate resources to serve their communities!**

**Fully-funded Library Aid would comprise less than one-tenth of 1% of the total State budget.**



NEW YORK LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
*Voice of the Library Community*

**Sources:**

[https://www.nyla.org/max/userfiles/Advocacy/History\\_of\\_Library\\_Aid\\_Chart\\_2016\\_-\\_1991.pdf](https://www.nyla.org/max/userfiles/Advocacy/History_of_Library_Aid_Chart_2016_-_1991.pdf)  
[http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation\\_calculator.htm](http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm)

## **B. Why are library systems important?**

Cuts in Library Aid fall heaviest upon library systems, which serve as the backbone of our information infrastructure. They provide cost sharing and efficient shared services that save libraries and their patrons' money. Through the Finger Lakes Library System, our local libraries offer access to a wide range of materials and services that they could never afford individually.

According to NYLA, for every \$1 of State Aid put into a public library system, approximately \$7 in services are provided for public library users.

## **C. Libraries are essential in a tough economy:**

**Library usage and demand for services are surging.** A January 2017 Sienna poll shows that library usage is up statewide over the last 5 years in households making less than \$50,000 annually.

**Libraries offer essential services.** For 25% of households earning less than \$50,000 annually, and for 20% of African – American and Latino households, the local library is the primary source of internet access.

**Jobseekers need libraries — often simply to apply to jobs!** Of the respondents in the aforementioned Sienna poll using their library for job seeking or career building programs, 53% were African – American and 40% were households making less than \$50,000 annually.

**Libraries ARE education!** When schools close at the end of each day, each week, and each school year, libraries remain open to New York's children and families. For pre-school aged children, libraries have continuously provided opportunities for enrichment dedicated to equality of access and free inquiry.

**Libraries are the leading digital literacy educators in New York State.** The same Board of Regents that oversees schools, colleges, BOCES and other educational institutions charters libraries. Library aid is administered through the NYS Department of Education.

### **Increase Funding in NYS Construction Grant Program to \$30M Annually!**

State investment had remained stagnant for nearly a decade at \$14M prior to increases in the FY 2016-17 and 2017-18 budgets. The proposed budget cuts this funding back down to \$14M.

## Why does state advocacy matter for my library?



Both your library and FLLS depend upon state taxpayer-based funding to ensure a strong economic future.

NYS Library Aid is allocated each year based on Education Law formulas. It comprises over 80% of FLLS funding, and the infrastructure FLLS provides enables our 33 libraries to share resources and costs that they cannot afford individually. Library Aid also provides LLSA funding, NYS Construction Grants, and NOVELNY Databases.

This funding has been cut dramatically in recent years to unsustainable levels (and disproportionately compared with other educational institutions), so we continually need to help legislators understand how important we are. These cuts are devastating to us, yet our funding comprises a tiny percentage of the total budget (full funding would be less than 1/10 of 1 percent). Legislators often picture libraries simply as buildings with books, so we must do all we can to help them understand our critical community role.

In addition to the yearly state aid, one-time Bullet Aid is sometimes available from legislators to libraries in their district. Fostering a good working relationship with your legislator is key to receiving this direct aid.

### **FLLS State Advocacy Campaign Efforts:**

It is essential that we advocate together for library funding before the state budget is finalized in late March. The New York Library Association (NYLA) sets the legislative agenda for all NYS libraries each year in January. FLLS provides free transportation to the statewide Library Advocacy Day, and organizes a postcard campaign in the weeks leading up to it.

It is especially important that we bring a strong showing of local library staff, trustees, and patrons to Advocacy Day to meet with their legislators in person. Remember, legislators always listen closely to their own constituents! If we don't show up with representatives from their district, they assume that we don't really need our funding.

FLLS also forwards NYLA legislative alerts throughout the year. These email alerts make it easy to contact legislators with the click of a button when an important bill is being considered. For even more impact, make phone calls and write letters. Even one constituent call or letter can have an impact on how a legislator votes.



# Annual Advocacy Checklist for Your Library

It's critical to keep in contact with officials year round about your library so that you can develop a good working relationship with them:

- ☐ Add your legislators to your **mailing list**.
- ☐ **Invite them to visit you** in person for a library tour or an event. They are always interested in good photo-ops! A Summer Reading event is often the perfect opportunity since the legislative session normally concludes by early July. *See p.32 for event planning tips.*
- ☐ Join FLLS at **Library Advocacy Day in Albany** to meet with your legislators in person. FLLS provides free transportation to this yearly event, normally held in late February or early March.
- ☐ **Collect postcards** from patrons each January/February (supplied by FLLS) to help legislators hear directly from their constituents about library funding issues.
- ☐ Stay in touch with legislators throughout the year via **social media** – they'll love the publicity. On Facebook, "like" their page, share/like their posts and post on their wall; on Twitter, start a conversation or give them a "shout-out"; on Foursquare, "check in" to the location and tag them during visits.
- ☐ **Write/call** legislators a few times per year, and always send thank you notes when you get a response. *See pp. 29-31 for a sample letters and a phone script.*
- ☐ Post a "Contact your Officials" button and "Library Value Calculator" on your website and Facebook during **legislative alerts** (see [www.flls.org/advocacy](http://www.flls.org/advocacy))
- ☐ Join the **NLYA Action E-List** to receive timely alerts about email campaigns when libraries need support: <http://capwiz.com/ala/ny/mlm/signup/>
- ☐ **Get the local paper involved:** Write a letter to the editor (and have trustees write them), and/or ask the paper to support libraries with an editorial. *See p.30.*
- ☐ Visit [www.flls.org/advocacy](http://www.flls.org/advocacy) to explore other advocacy resources and tools.

*For more tips, please see p. 25, "Developing an Ongoing Relationship with Legislators".*

Also, keep in mind that all of these steps will help you advocate for your library on a local level too! The quotes, statistics and photos you gather through the postcard campaign can be used for local advocacy efforts. Likewise, a strong personal relationship with your legislator can help you win Bullet Aid and other forms of direct support.

# NYLA 2018 BUDGET PRIORITY –

## **Equal Access, IT Infrastructure, and Energy Efficiency: Fund the Public Library Capital Aid Program at \$30M**



### **Background:**

- 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 most recent available data provided by the New York State Education Department's Division of Library Development (DLD) articulates an existing \$1.7B in capital needs statewide
- 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
- 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

### **Data Points:**

- **New York State's public libraries are rapidly aging**
  - o 48% of local libraries are more than 60 years old; an additional 33% are more than 30 years old
  - o 25% are not accessible to differently-abled patrons
- **Public Libraries require capital investment to accommodate high-speed broadband infrastructure**
  - o A January 2017 Siena poll found that for 25% of households making less than \$50,000 annually, **the public library is their primary source of internet access**
  - o Stagnant funding disproportionately impacts economically disadvantaged communities, widening the digital divide
- **Public Libraries desperately require energy-efficient infrastructure upgrades**
  - o Library use has surged statewide among all demographics, leading to longer hours and increased energy costs
  - o Energy inefficient buildings have increased operating costs and forced reduced staffing and programming
- **Public Library capital needs have been comparatively underfunded**
  - o Public schools: \$2.3B, five-year capital investment (Library Capital Aid = 4.1%)
  - o Higher Education: \$3.2B, five-year capital investment in SUNY & CUNY
  - o State Parks: \$900M, five-year capital commitment to fully address \$1B in deferred maintenance

## **QUOTABLE FACTS ABOUT AMERICA'S LIBRARIES (ALA, 2016)**

### **Did You Know?**

- 58% of adults in the U.S. have public library cards.
- Americans go to school, public and academic libraries more than three times more often than they go to the movies.
- Reference librarians in the nation's public and academic libraries answer nearly 6.6 million questions weekly. Standing single file, the line of questioners would span from Ocean City, Maryland to Juneau, Alaska.
- A 2012 poll conducted for the American Library Association found that 94% of respondents agreed that public libraries play an important role in giving everyone a chance to succeed because they provide free access to materials and resources.
- There are more public libraries than McDonald's in the U.S. – a total of 16,766 including branches.
- Americans spend nearly three times as much on candy as they do on public libraries.
- Americans check out an average of more than eight books a year. They spend \$35.81 a year for the public library – about the average cost of one hardcover book.
- Almost 89 percent of public library outlets now offer wireless Internet access.
- More than 92% of public libraries provide services for job seekers.
- A 2011 Pew study found that about 24% of library cardholders had read e-books in the past year. Of them, 57% preferred borrowing them and about 33% preferred purchasing them.

## NYS Legislative Districts by Library

<b>LIBRARY</b>	<b>ASSEMBLY DISTRICT</b>	<b>SENATE DISTRICT</b>
<b>Apalachin</b>	124	52
<b>Auburn</b>	126	50 and 51*
<b>Aurora</b>	126	54
<b>Berkshire</b>	124	52
<b>Candor</b>	124	52
<b>Cato</b>	130	50
<b>Cincinnatus</b>	126	50
<b>Cortland</b>	125	51
<b>Dryden</b>	125	51
<b>Fair Haven</b>	130	54
<b>Groton</b>	125	51
<b>Homer</b>	126	51
<b>Interlaken</b>	132	54
<b>Ithaca</b>	125	58
<b>Lansing</b>	125	54
<b>Lodi</b>	132	54
<b>Marathon</b>	126	51
<b>McGraw</b>	125	51
<b>Moravia</b>	126	51
<b>Newark Valley</b>	124	52
<b>Newfield</b>	125	58
<b>Nichols</b>	124	52
<b>Ovid</b>	132	54
<b>Owego</b>	124	52
<b>Poplar Ridge</b>	126	54
<b>Port Byron</b>	130	54
<b>Seneca Falls</b>	131	54
<b>Spencer</b>	124	52
<b>Trumansburg</b>	125	58
<b>Union Springs</b>	126	54
<b>Waterloo</b>	131	54
<b>Waverly</b>	124	52
<b>Weedsport</b>	130	50

\* Auburn's service area is split into two districts. Find your NYS Senator by searching with your address at [www.nysenate.gov](http://www.nysenate.gov).

## The NYS Legislative Process

The Assembly, with its 150 members, and the Senate, with its 61 members, make up the New York State Legislature. Members are elected every two years. Each yearly legislative session begins in early January. One of their primary tasks is creating the yearly budget (due April 1).



The legislature attends session in Albany until the session end, usually in June or July. Legislators can also be called back to Albany for special legislative sessions, formal meetings, committee work or public hearings.

The legislative process begins in committees. Committees in each house analyze proposed bills, hold hearings for public input, and vote on whether such bills should be advanced for consideration. Each member of the Senate and the Assembly is appointed to serve on three to five committees. Both houses have Library Committees.

After the bill is finalized and reviewed, the bill reaches the Assembly floor for debate and vote. If it passes, it goes to the Senate. Once it passes both houses, it goes to the Governor, who may choose to sign it into law or veto. A 2/3 majority of both houses will override a veto.





# New York State Assembly

<http://assembly.state.ny.us/>

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## DISTRICT 124

**Assemblyman Christopher Friend (Republican)**

**FriendC@assembly.state.ny.us**



Chemist, earned his PhD at SUNY Buffalo. Big Flats native and attended Horseheads High School. He was elected to the Chemung County Legislature in 2006, then replaced Tom O'Mara's seat in 2010.

Committees: Ranking Minority Member Children & Families and Local Government Committees. Also sits on Transportation; Aging; and Corporations, Authorities and Commissions committees.

Priorities: State government reform, reduced taxes, job creation/business incentives, right to bear arms, reduction of government spending, expansion of charter schools.

Year Elected: 2010

<b>Represents:</b>	<b>District Office:</b>	<b>Albany Office:</b>
Apalachin Berkshire Candor Newark Valley Nichols Owego Spencer Waverly	476 Maple Street P.O. Box 441 Big Flats, NY 14814 607-562-3602	938 LOB Albany, NY 12248 518-455-4538

## DISTRICT 125

**Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton (Democrat / Working Families)**

**LiftonB@assembly.state.ny.us**



### Chair of Majority Steering Committee

Former teacher. Served in 2009 as Chair of the Assembly Committee on Libraries and Education Technology, in 2010 as Vice-Chair of the Assembly Majority Steering Committee, and was designated as Chair of the Assembly Majority Steering Committee in 2011. In 2015, she was named to the newly-formed Assembly Work Group on Climate Change.

Committees: Agriculture; Education; Election Law; Environmental Conservation; Higher Education; Rural Resources; Legislative Women's Caucus; Subcommittee on Election Day Operations & Voter Disenfranchisement

Priorities: Lifton makes education a priority, both PreK-12, as well as higher education. Lifton continues to push for implementation of the CFE decision to get new funding and reform to our PreK-12 schools, and fights for state support for all college students, and especially for SUNY campuses. Since 2008, she has devoted significant time to legislation and advocacy dealing with the issue of high volume hydrofracking (HVHF). She has been a leader on other issues of importance to women and families, including daycare, healthcare, and, notably, in the 2010 session, the licensing of midwives.

Year Elected: 2002

<b>Represents:</b>	<b>District Office:</b>	<b>Albany Office:</b>
Cortland Dryden Groton Ithaca Lansing McGraw Newfield Trumansburg	106 E. Court Street Ithaca, NY 14850 607-277-8030	555 LOB Albany, NY 12248 518-455-5444

**DISTRICT 126**  
**Assemblyman Gary Finch (Republican)**  
**FinchG@assembly.state.ny.us**



**Assistant Minority Leader to Minority Conference**

Small-business owner (Brew-Finch Funeral Homes), Auburn native. Extensive record of community service: Cayuga County United Way's president and campaign chair and also on its executive and finance committees; a charter member, past president, and big brother of Big Brothers and Big Sisters; past president Rotary Club; past board member of Hospice of the Finger Lakes; and past member of Leadership Cayuga's Curriculum Program Committee.

Priorities: Values higher education and heavily involved with Cayuga Community College: Finch has served the college in various capacities including Chair of the Board of Trustees and as a member of the Negotiating, Scholarship, Presidential Search and Strategic Planning committees. He has served on the Assembly's Education Committee and continues to be a strong and knowledgeable advocate on educational issues.

Committees: Finch currently serves as Assistant Minority Leader to the Minority Conference. He is also assigned to the Assembly committees on Agriculture, Banks, Correction, Energy, Housing, and Rules. Finch previously served as ranking minority member of the Assembly's Correction Committee and continues to be a vocal advocate on behalf of correction officers, their families and correction issues.

Year elected: 1999

<b>Represents:</b>	<b>District Office:</b>	<b>Albany Office:</b>
Auburn Aurora Cincinnatus Homer Marathon Moravia Poplar Ridge Union Springs	69 South St. Auburn, NY 13021 (315)255-3045	448 LOB Albany, NY 12248 (518)455-5878

**DISTRICT 130**  
**Assemblyman Bob Oaks (Republican)**  
**OaksR@assembly.state.ny.us**



In September 2011, Minority Leader Brian Kolb appointed Assemblyman Oaks as the Ranking Minority Member of the Ways and Means Committee. The committee is the Assembly's Fiscal Committee where any proposed legislation with tax or spending implications is considered, including the annual \$132.5 billion state budget. The Ways and Means Committee is responsible for analyzing the Governor's budget proposal, holding public budget hearings, forecasting state revenues and participating in joint conference committees. As Ranking Minority Member, Assemblyman Oaks leads the debate on the final budget.

Committees: Rules; Ways and Means; Legislative Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment.

Priorities: From the time he was first elected in 1992, Assemblyman Oaks' priorities have included improving New York State's economic environment and the agricultural industry, as well as strengthening local government services. He continues to be a dedicated advocate for reducing taxes, enhancing educational opportunities and achieving government reforms. Central to his representation is his commitment to constituent service and help with state government issues.

Year Elected: 1992

<b>Represents:</b>	<b>District Office:</b>	<b>Albany Office:</b>
Cato Fair Haven Port Byron Weedsport	10 Leach Road Lyons, NY 14489 (315)946-5166	444 Capitol Albany, NY 12248 (518)455-5655

**DISTRICT 131**  
**Assemblyman Brian Kolb (Republican)**  
**KolbB@assembly.state.ny.us**



**Minority Leader**

He served as an Adjunct Professor of Adult and Graduate Education at Roberts Wesleyan College. He is a former Chairman of the Finger Lakes Community College Foundation and is a former member of the Honeoye Central School Board and the Finger Lakes Community College Board of Trustees.

Legislative Priorities: reducing taxes, making NY affordable, generating jobs, creating a better business climate and reforming state government.

Community involvement and public service have been hallmarks of Leader Kolb's background. He is currently a member of the Honeoye Chapter of the Sons of the American Legion, Ontario Charities Classic Board of Directors, the Ontario ARC Advisory Board, the New York Farm Bureau, and is a Notary Public. He previously served as Supervisor for the Town of Richmond, Chairman of Leadership Rochester's Board of Directors and as a member of the Ontario County Revolving Loan Fund Committee, the Ontario County Board of Supervisors and the New York State Public Authorities Control Board.

Brian is a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the League of Women Voters, the National Rifle Association (NRA), the Shooters' Committee on Political Education (SCOPE), the American Irish Legislators Society and the Knights of Columbus.

Committees: Rules

Year elected: 2000

<b>Represents:</b>	<b>District Office:</b>	<b>Albany Office:</b>
Seneca Falls Waterloo	607 W Washington St. Suite 2 Geneva, NY 14456 (315)781-2030	933 LOB Albany, NY 12248 (518)455-3751



## **DISTRICT 132**

**Assemblyman Philip A. Palmesano (Republican)**

**PalmesanoP@assembly.state.ny.us**



**Vice – Chair to the Minority Conference**

**Ranking Minority Member on the Energy Committee**

Active in community affairs, Phil has served on the Steuben County Community Services Board; the Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben Workforce NY system; member of the marketing committee of Catholic Charities of Steuben County. He also has served on advisory committees for Camp Good Days and Special Times and the Greater Corning Chamber of Commerce Corning-Steuben Leadership Program, having been one of the program's inaugural graduates in 2008.

Additionally, Phil is a member of the bipartisan New York State Legislative Commission on Rural Resources, comprised of both minority and majority conference members from the Senate and Assembly, who work together on a wide range of issues including agriculture, economic development, education, environment, land use, local governments, transportation, and health and human services.

Committees: Serves on the Libraries and Education Technology; Corporations, Authorities and Commissions; Correction; Education; Energy; Tourism, Parks, Arts, and Sports Development committees.

Year Elected: 2011 (newly representing this area in 2012 due to redistricting)

<b>Represents:</b>	<b>District Office:</b>	<b>Albany Office:</b>
Interlaken Lodi Ovid	105 E. Steuben St. Bath, NY 14810 (607)776-9691 Fax: 607-776-5185	LOB 320 Albany, NY 12248 (518)455-5791 Fax: 518-455-4644

# New York State Senate

[www.nysenate.gov](http://www.nysenate.gov)

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## DISTRICT 50

**Senator John A. DeFrancisco (Republican)**

**[jdefranc@nysenate.gov](mailto:jdefranc@nysenate.gov)**



**Deputy Majority Leader State Senate**  
**Vice-Chair Rules Committee**

A community leader and education advocate, Senator DeFrancisco is also a former member and President of the Syracuse City School District Board of Education and a past Vice President of the Conference of Large City Boards of Education.

Legislative priorities: reduce crime, reform welfare, reduce taxes, make government more transparent, hold the line on state spending, job creation.

Year elected: 1992 (representing this area since 2012 due to redistricting)

Recent Bullet Aid Contributions to FLLS Libraries: 2016: gave \$3500 to Kellogg Library, \$5000 to Stewart B. Lang Library, \$5000 to Weedsport Free Library, \$10,000 to Seymour Library.

<b>Represents:</b>	<b>District Office:</b>	<b>Albany Office:</b>
Auburn* Cato Cincinnatus Weedsport	333 East Washington Street 800 State Office Building Syracuse, NY 13202 (315) 428-7632	416 Capitol Albany, NY 12247 (518) 455-3511

\*Auburn's service area is splits into two districts. Please use your specific address at [www.nysenate.gov](http://www.nysenate.gov) to find your NYS Senator.

**DISTRICT 51**  
**Senator James L. Seward (Republican)**  
**Seward@nysenate.gov**



**Member of the Senate Library Committee**

In 2011, Seward became assistant majority leader on conference operations. He works closely with senate leadership in directing important legislation to the senate floor. Seward currently is the Chair of the Majority Program Development Committee.

Senator Seward has been a consistent advocate for education, securing state aid for local districts to offset rising taxes and to support technology and special education initiatives within his schools. He strongly supported enactment of the STAR school tax relief program and has championed property tax relief.

Legislative priorities: jobs, business growth, tax relief, health insurance coverage/reform, economic development.

Committees: Insurance Committee( chair); Agriculture, Education; Finance; Health; Higher Education; Libraries; Rules; Technology & Innovation; Taskforce on Lyme & Tick-Borne Diseases; Heroin Task Force; Workforce Development Taskforce.

Year elected: 1986

Recent Bullet Aid Contributions to FLLS Libraries: 2016: Gave \$3500 a piece to Cortland Free Library, Groton Public Library, Lamont Memorial Free Library, Peck Memorial Library, Phillips Free Library, Powers Library, and Southworth Library Association.

<b>Represents:</b>	<b>District Office:</b>	<b>Albany Office:</b>
Auburn* Cortland Dryden Groton Homer Marathon McGraw Moravia	41 S. Main Street Oneonta, NY 13820 (607)432-5524  4030 West Rd. Cortland, NY 13045 (607) 758-9005	172 State Street Room 430, Capitol Albany, NY 12247 (518) 455-3131

\* Auburn's service area is splits into two districts. Please use your specific address at <http://www.nysenate.gov/> to find your NYS Senator.

**DISTRICT 52**  
**Senator Fred Akshar (Republican)**  
**akshar@nysenate.gov**



Fred has dedicated his career to serving and protecting the citizens of the Southern Tier. He has spent 15 years with local law enforcement, 2 years with the Chenango County Sheriff's Office and 13 with the Broome County Sheriff's Office. Fred's law enforcement experience touched on every level of the Sheriff's Office operations, and provided him with an intimate knowledge of the concerns of the people and communities across the entire region.

Fred is a champion for crime victims and for protecting young people from the scourge of dangerous drugs, like heroin. He served as a volunteer member of the Crime Victims Assistance Center Board and the Broome Opioid Abuse Council, where he used his firsthand experience in combating drug trafficking and intervening on behalf of victims of drug addiction to advocate for better education, prevention and treatment for heroin's victims.

Committees: Elections (chair); Banks; Cities; Codes; Insurance; Labor; Crime Victims, Crime & Correction; Legislative Commission on Rural Resources; Racing, Gaming & Wagering; Heroin Task Force (co-chair).

Legislative Priorities: As a State Senator, Fred's priorities are strengthening the Southern Tier economy by helping small businesses succeed and create jobs, battling drug addiction and making our communities safer, as well as fighting for a fair shake from Albany.

Year Elected: 2015 (special election on November 15<sup>th</sup>)

<b>Represents:</b>	<b>District Office:</b>	<b>Albany Office:</b>
Apalachin Berkshire Candor Newark Valley Nichols Owego Spencer Waverly	44 Hawley St. Rm 1607 Binghamton, NY 13901 (877) 854-2687	LOB 805 Albany, NY 12247 (518) 455-2677

**DISTRICT 54**  
**Senator Pamela Helming (Republican)**  
**helming@nysenate.gov**



After graduating from Hiram College in 1984, Pam worked with developmentally disabled individuals and followed a career path which lead her to manage several local group homes. From this experience, Pam learned that she wished to dedicate her life to serving others. Her desire to make a difference in the community led to public service, first as a town board member, and later being elected Town Supervisor of Canandaigua.

Committees: Legislative Commission on Rural Resources (chair); Banks; Children and Families; Higher Education; Consumer Protection; Crime Victims, Crime and Correction (vice-chair); Social Services; Heroin Task Force; Workforce Development Taskforce; Task Force on Lyme Disease & Tick-Borne Diseases.

Priorities: cut taxes, property tax relief, more efficient and transparent government, protecting natural resources

Recent Bullet Aid Contributions to FLLS Libraries: (From Nozzolio):

2016: Gave \$10,000 a piece to Aurora Free Library, Fair Haven Public Library, Interlaken Public Library, Lansing Community Library, Edith B. Ford Library, Hazard Library, Port Byron Library, Springport Free Library, and Waterloo Library and Historical Society. Gave \$20,000 to the Seneca Falls Library.

Year Elected: 2016

<b>Represents:</b>	<b>District Office:</b>	<b>Albany Office:</b>
Aurora Fair Haven Interlaken Lansing Lodi Ovid Poplar Ridge Port Byron Seneca Falls Union Springs Waterloo	425 Exchange St Geneva, NY 14456 (315)568-9816 FAX: (315) 789-1946	Room 503 Capitol Building Albany, NY 12247 (518)455-2366 FAX: (518)426-6953





## **DISTRICT 58**

### **Senator Tom O'Mara (Republican)**

**OMara@nysenate.gov**

Senator O'Mara is a native of Chemung County, born and raised in Horseheads. Active in his community, Senator O'Mara is counsel to the Chemung County Industrial Development Agency. His focus is on improving the business climate in NYS and fostering economic growth in the region.

Committees: Senator O'Mara currently serves as Chair of the Senate Standing Committee on Environmental Conservation and Vice-Chair of the Senate Transportation Committee. In addition to his chairmanships, the senator also serves as a member on the following Senate committees: Agriculture; Banks; Codes; Energy & Telecommunications; Finance; Insurance; Investigations and Government Operations; and Judiciary. He also serves as a member of the following Senate Task Forces: Heroin and Opioid Addiction; and Lyme and Tick-borne Diseases; Workforce Development.

Priorities: Outspoken in his opposition to the out-of-control spending in Albany, cutting waste in government, particularly in the state's \$50-billion-plus system of Medicaid where he has championed better ways to manage care, improve disease management and utilize cutting-edge data mining technology to potentially save billions of taxpayer dollars that are being lost to waste, fraud and abuse. He is also focused on developing public policies and strategies that allow state government to improve the economic climate for doing business in New York by opposing tax increases, reducing state spending, overregulation and oppressive property taxes.

Year Elected: 2010 (served in NYS Assembly 2005-2010)

Recent Bullet Aid Contributions to FLLS Libraries: 2016: \$3500 a piece to Newfield Public Library, and Ulysses Philomathic Library in Trumansburg. \$4000 to Tompkins County Public Library in Ithaca, and \$4000 to the Finger Lakes Library System.

<b>Represents:</b>	<b>District Office:</b>	<b>Albany Office:</b>
Ithaca Newfield Trumansburg	333 East Water Street (3rd Floor, Suite 301) Elmira, NY 14901 United States (607)735-9671	307 Legislative Office Building Albany, NY 12247 (518)455-2091

# Developing an Ongoing Relationship with Legislators

*Your legislator's time is valuable, but he or she appreciates constituent contacts. Here are some ideas for how to most effectively develop an ongoing relationship with your legislator while advocating on behalf of libraries.*

## **1. DO YOUR HOMEWORK.**

Know the issues and the particular interests of your legislator. Keep a background file on your legislators, including special interests and personal profiles. You won't agree on all of the issues all of the time, but a legislator needs to know what constituents are thinking.

## **2. KEEP IN TOUCH.**

Write, call, or visit your legislators and their staff members to introduce yourself. Let them know who you represent and volunteer to keep them informed about your issues, their impact on your community and on the legislator's district.

Add the legislator's name to your mailing list and ask to have your name added to the legislator's mailing list.

Make sure the legislator receives notice of and invitations to special events held at your library. This serves as a reminder of your library's role in the community. Remind your legislator that attending these functions is an excellent way to meet with constituents.

Invite legislators and perhaps their spouses to tour your library. Show them exactly what your library does and how it contributes to community well-being.

## **3. BE CONSISTENT AND RELIABLE.**

Remember that official legislative priorities are set by the New York Library Association (NYLA). Make clear any differences between your opinions and the position of NYLA

and/or FLLS. Remember that both NYLA and FLLS must be viewed as credible sources of information in order to be successful on behalf of libraries.

It is also not effective to mix discussion of your personal issues with discussion of library issues, or you will dilute your message and confuse the legislator as to your priorities.

#### **4. GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE.**

Give public recognition to deserving legislators through awards or at library functions to which your legislator has been invited. Always say "THANK YOU" for support of your issues. A personal thank you note is also very effective.

#### **5. BE A PLAYER.**

Attend events, social and other types, at which legislators will be present -- not to lobby overtly, but to get acquainted and make them aware of you as an active member of the community. Even if you can afford to give only a small amount of money, attending fund raisers is an important part of our current political process.

If the legislator has been helpful to your library, get involved in his or her election campaign. People who give their time, and who can recruit others to campaign, are very important to a legislator.

#### **6. TELL US ABOUT IT.**

Please let FLLS know about the concerns and interests your legislator has expressed, along with any commitment of support to library issues. It will really help us help you!

# Lobbying Tips

## A. Universal Lobbying Principles:

*Five basic rules of effective communication for advocacy:*

1. **Be Brief.** A Legislator's time is limited and so is yours.
2. **Be Appreciative.** Give thanks for past support and current action or efforts.
3. **Be Specific.** Refer to exact titles and bill numbers you want supported, and speak about specific local library needs. Refer to the legislator's own district's needs if you live or work there. Be specific about how people's lives are affected by the bill or issue.
4. **Be Informative.** Give good reasons why a bill or measure should be supported.
5. **Be Courteous.** The name of the game is respect. Ask. Do not demand or threaten. Be pleasant but firm, positive and polite.



Additional important tips:

- Be passionate, enthusiastic, and committed to your ideas and concerns.
- Do not whine, complain, or display anger.
- Focus deliberately on your message and never introduce non-library issues.
- Use simple language and avoid jargon.
- Be scrupulously honest and forthright in all communications.

*- adapted from the American Library Association*

## B. How to Tell Your Story:

The most effective way to communicate to your legislators about the importance of libraries is often to share a library story or two that shows how your library makes a difference.

Effective stories...

- are simple, brief and personal.
- have a beginning, middle and end.
- have a "punchline".

- do not use real names unless you have been given permission.
- have a message.
- are appropriate.
- are specific.
- show the library/librarian clearly solving a problem or filling a need.
- illustrate your point in real-life terms.

A few carefully chosen statistics can be impressive, but personal stories offer a powerful emotional connection that brings your message to life. The most effective stories are not about what the library does. They are about the people who use and benefit from our libraries. They are the inventor who did his research at the university library, the school child who talks online to a scientist at the North Pole, the welfare mother who starts her own business based on what she's learned at the library.

*-- partially excerpted from "LSTA Success Stories", by Patricia Glass Schuman*

### **C. Meeting with Legislators in Person:**

1. Be on time for your meeting.
2. Dress comfortably, but look your best (business casual is fine).
3. Identify yourself – trustee? Friends of the library? Library user? Staff?
4. Be concise and diplomatic.
5. Be a good listener.
6. Put a local and personal angle on the issues.
7. Press for a commitment. Don't let your legislator evade the issue or change the subject.
8. Don't be intimidated! Your legislator is in office to serve you.
9. Don't guess. If you don't know the answer to a question promise to provide one.
10. Say thank-you when you leave. Follow-up with a brief note, repeating succinctly the reason for your visit. *A sample thank you note is provided in this guide.*





## D. Writing Effective Letters:

Second to visiting in person, phone calls are the most effective way to communicate with your legislators. They are extremely valuable at any time of the year:

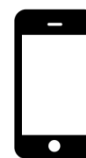


1. Use the correct form of address for the legislator: "The Honorable John Doe."
2. If your handwriting is legible, write the letter by hand. If you prefer to type it, make sure you sign it with a hand-written PS.
3. Identify yourself and state your reasons for writing. Avoid clichés, and try to personalize your message with real-life stories and examples.
4. Be brief, clear and specific, and specifically reference the bill or issue by name and number.
5. Close with a direct question or statement about your legislator's position on a bill or an issue, and offer to provide further information on the subject.
6. Include your address on the letter and envelope.

☛ *A sample letter is provided in this guide on the next page.*

## E. Making Effective Phone Calls:

Phoning legislators is an effective and easy way to make your voice heard. It is especially appropriate in time-sensitive situations, such as before a budget deliberation (letters can take weeks due to security):



1. Identify yourself by name, address and home town within the legislator's district.
2. Identify the bill or issue by name and number.
3. Briefly state your position on the bill/issue, and how you would like your legislator to vote.
4. Ask for your legislator's view on the bill or issue; be firm in obtaining a commitment to vote.
5. Show appreciation for his/her service or past votes. Be positive and friendly, and respect the legislator's busy schedule by keeping your call brief.
6. The legislator's aide may take the message. If this happens, simply identify yourself as outlined above and state how you would like your legislator to vote.

## Sample Letter to Legislator:

Your Name  
Your Street Address  
Your City, State, Zip

Date  
The Honorable John Doe  
New York State Senate / New York State Assembly  
Legislator's Address

Dear Senator Doe / Assemblyman Doe,

I am writing to urge you to restore Library Aid to \$\_\_\_\_\_ in this year's budget, the full amount according to NYS Education Law.

As you may know, total funding in last year's enacted budget was \$95.9M. This places library aid at 2006 levels, which is not sustainable. Our libraries need adequate funding to serve their communities!

Libraries are essential providers of education and information to our communities, schools, colleges and businesses. Our libraries and library systems are the information backbone of our society – particularly in this new digital age. As educational institutions, for all ages, they are a key part of the solution when a community is struggling economically.

In these difficult economic times, people especially depend upon their libraries. A January 2017 Siena Poll found that library usage is up statewide over the last 5 years for those households making less than \$50,000 annually. Public libraries are also the primary source for internet access for 25% of these households. Of the respondents who have used their local public library for job seeking or career building programs in the last 6 months, 53% were African-American and 40% were households making less than \$50,000 annually.

Time and again it has been shown that libraries are part of the solution to our economic situation. I hope you will support our libraries when the time comes to vote on the state budget.

Sincerely,

Your Name  
Title

## Sample Thank You Note

Your Name  
Your Street Address  
Your City, State, Zip

Date

The Honorable John Doe  
New York State Senate / New York State Assembly  
Legislator's Address

Dear Senator Doe / Assemblyman Doe,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me last Wednesday about restoring Library Aid to \$\_\_\_\_\_ in this year's budget, the full amount according to NYS Education Law.

As we discussed, in this rural area the library is often the only place that people can go to access technology, to fill out job applications, and to continue their learning. Through the cost-sharing infrastructure that FLLS provides our libraries are able to offer numerous essential resources to their communities despite limited resources, but we can't live on love alone. In these difficult economic times, your support for sustainably-funded library systems is needed now more than ever.

As the great astronomer and author Carl Sagan once said, "I think the health of our civilization, the depth of our awareness about the underpinnings of our culture, and our concern for the future can all be tested by how well we support our libraries". Last year's \_\_\_\_% funding restoration was a step in the right direction towards passing that test, but we have another \_\_\_\_% to go just to return to funding levels from nearly a decade ago. Please continue to represent the interests of our libraries by supporting a funding restoration this year.

Sincerely,

Your Name  
Title

# Inviting Legislators to Events

*Inviting legislators to visit you is key to helping them understand what modern libraries do!*

## Extending the Invitation:

1. Give as much advance notice as possible. Ideally, send the invitation with at least 2-3 months' notice. At minimum, give 4-6 weeks.
2. The invitation should look official -- on letterhead if possible.  
*A sample invitation is provided in this guide.*
3. Keep it simple: invite them to something you're already doing, such as a summer reading celebration or back to school open house. Think about which event would make the best photo op.
4. Briefly paint a picture of the event for them, and think about how to convey how the event will fit with the legislator's goals and priorities. Key information to include would be:
  - Date/time/location (ideally, offer multiple dates/times).
  - A description of the event and the audience (teens? parents? educators?).
  - The estimated size of attendance at the event.
  - What their role will be, including if they will be expected to speak.
  - Some key information about your library that illustrates the reach you have into the community, such as how many patrons it serves, the total number of community members who attended a library event in the past year, the number of reference questions answered in a given year, etc.
5. Give them a clear incentive to come:
  - Highlight if they'll be able to meet voters directly and take photos.
  - State what media outlets you plan on inviting, such as the local TV station or newspaper.
  - Create a role for them! Ask them to judge the bookmark contest or distribute awards to summer reading contest winners.
  - If the elected official has been supportive of libraries in the past, you may want to honor him/her at the event with a plaque or other recognition.
  - Let them know a photographer will be there.
6. After the invitation is sent, follow up in one week with a phone call if you have not received a response.
7. Find out if they have a library card, and if not, give them one at the event.
8. Don't be discouraged if your legislator declines. They are very busy and it is not personal! Just remember to invite them to the next event you have, and keep them informed about the library by adding them to your newsletter mailing list,

sending them a library card, and sending them articles and photos about your news and accomplishments. If the elected official has children or teens, you may want to pass along lists of recommended reading, bookmarks, etc. as well.

9. If your elected official can't come to your event, go to him or her. They usually spend time in their local office after the legislative session ends (normally by early July). Contact his or her office and schedule a visit. Consider bringing teens, trustees or other library supporters with you to talk first-hand about what the library means to them.

### **Planning the Library Event:**

1. You don't need to create a special event just for the elected officials. It just needs to be an opportunity for the elected officials to learn a little bit about what a modern library does. Summer reading programs often offer the perfect opportunity for a visit.
2. Market the event aggressively to ensure a good turnout. A crowded library will help emphasize the important role libraries play in the community.
3. Designate a member of the staff or a volunteer to take photos at the event.
4. Create a take-away folder or packet for the elected official. It can include recent newspaper articles about library activities, photos, a fact sheet about the library, a list of upcoming events, your business card and more. You may also want to include advocacy resources, such as FLLS's talking points flyer.
5. Media: Send a media advisory a week in advance to the local newspaper, pennysaver, radio/tv stations, and online media. A few days later, call reporters directly to follow up. The best time to call is usually 10am- 2pm. Have a brief and simple story pitch ready (30 seconds) that covers when/what the event is, who will be there, and why it is unique/important to the community. If they are not personally interested, ask if another reporter might want the story. *A sample media advisory is provided in this guide.*

### **Follow Up:**

1. Send a thank you note to the legislator, preferably handwritten.
2. Send photos you took of the legislator to him/her (ideally, both a hard copy and an emailed digital copy).
3. Evaluate the event: What went well? What could have gone better?
4. Write a post for the library's blog, Facebook page, and/or an article for the newsletter summing up the event. Send any print media (either your newsletter or local coverage) to the legislator's local office.

-- adapted from [http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/District\\_Days](http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/District_Days)

## Sample Event Invitation

Your Name  
Your Street Address  
Your City, State, Zip

Date  
The Honorable John Doe  
New York State Senate / New York State Assembly  
Legislator's Address

Dear Senator Doe / Assemblyman Doe,

On behalf of the [name] Library, I am writing to invite you to attend our [Library Open House] on [date] at [time] at [location].

[The Open House] includes live music, refreshments, and a brief ceremony where we'll be giving certificates of achievement to [our teen volunteers, top summer reading achievers]. We'd love for you to say a few words about [youth volunteerism, literacy, the start of the school year] before the certificates are handed out.

In addition to seeing the impact of the meaningful programs and services that our library is able to implement thanks to your funding support, it's also an opportunity for you to visit with [teens, librarians, parents, future voters].

Many thanks for your consideration of this invitation. I will follow up with a call to your office next week to learn of your availability. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Your Name  
Title

## Sample Media Advisory Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** [Senator/Assemblyman Doe] Will Kick off Library Card Sign-up Month at the [Library Name]

**CONTACT:** Your Name, (xxx)xxx-xxxx, Email Address

**WHEN:** Date, Time

**WHERE:** Library Name, Address

**WHO:** *(list all notable participants)*

Senator/Assemblyman Doe

Name, Library Director

Name, Library Board President

Name, City Mayor

**WHAT:** September is National Library Card Sign-up Month! To celebrate, Senator/Assemblyman [Doe] will sign up for [his/her] own library card at the [Library Name] in [City]. [He/she] will also judge and present awards for the library's teen poster contest. The poster contest will feature submissions that encourage community members to get a library card for free access to everything from books to computers to movies to music. This event will also feature live music and refreshments, and community members of all ages will be in attendance to celebrate their library with the Senator/Assemblyman.

**WHY:** September is National Library Card Sign-up Month – a time when libraries across the country remind parents and students that a library card is the most important school supply of all. The observance was launched in 1987 to meet the challenge of then Secretary of Education William J. Bennett who said: "Let's have a national campaign...every child should obtain a library card - and use it." Since then, thousands of public and school libraries join each fall in a national effort to ensure every child does just that.

Please call or email [name of contact person] at XXX-XXX-XXXX or [email address] to confirm your attendance at this event. To learn more, visit: [your web page].

XXX



## Senate Bullet Aid Thank You Letter

*Senators are sometimes able to make one-time targeted "bullet aid" awards to libraries in their districts. Fostering a good relationship with your representatives is key to receiving this aid! If your library receives bullet aid award, be sure to give generous thanks both privately and publically. In addition to a thank you note, be sure to let the press know, and to write thank you notes on your website and social media feeds.*

+++

Your Name  
Your Street Address  
Your City, State, Zip

Date  
The Honorable John Doe  
New York State Senate  
Legislator's Address

Dear Senator Doe,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the *[library name]*, I want to thank you for providing \$[amount] of funding via FY2017-18 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

# Ask Your Local Paper to Support Libraries with an Editorial

Every daily newspaper has an editorial board, which meets on a regular basis to discuss the news and choose topics and opinions for editorials. The editorial board also can endorse candidates for public office, take a stand on a variety of issues and urge voters to take a certain position.



As a citizen in the community, you can contact the editorial board to attempt to persuade it to take a position on increased state funding for libraries:

## 1. Requesting a meeting

Begin by calling your local newspaper and ask to speak to someone regarding scheduling a meeting with the Editorial Board. The person you talk with will want to find out the purpose and rationale for having an Editorial Board meeting on the topic of additional state funding for libraries. Your rationale might include:

- *You have noticed they've been covering the library funding issue and would like to weigh in;*
- *They have not recently covered the issue of library funding, which is critically important because...(see [www.flis.org/advocacy](http://www.flis.org/advocacy) for data);*
- *This newspaper is the best venue for discussing this important issue and I would like to discuss it further at an editorial board meeting.*

If you are unable to secure a meeting, ask if they would accept an op-ed piece on the need for library funding, written by you or in collaboration with other library supporters.

## 2. Preparing the presentation

For your presentation to the Editorial Board, bring other library supporters (trustees, seniors, teens, teachers, etc.) with different backgrounds and expertise to demonstrate the community's widespread support for increased library funding. Diverse supporters will also help you answer questions on a variety of issues.

You should also bring handouts on library funding issues and background materials. Photos of library programs in action are always a good idea, as many people in the

audience won't already know what the role of a modern library is. Putting together a PowerPoint presentation can also be especially effective! Visit [www.fils.org/advocacy](http://www.fils.org/advocacy) for talking points, data, and other advocacy tools to help you make your case.

The amount of time for your presentation may only be 10-15 minutes, so be prepared to present your case quickly and succinctly. Use FLLS's talking points to organize your thoughts, making sure to make connections between state aid for libraries and its impact on your own library and community.

**One question you can always expect is** "Why should libraries get additional funding when the state has an enormous deficit and everyone else is being asked to take a cut?" Some answers might include:

- Even in good economic times libraries did not receive an increase;
- Libraries are an essential service and not a luxury;
- Libraries at all levels are an important part of the effort to raise student academic achievement and we cannot shortchange our children's future any longer.

At the end of your presentation, ask the Editorial Board if they have any questions or concerns. They may be interested in hearing about some relevant statistics or a few stories about the people locally who depend on libraries for opportunities to learn and grow.

### **3. Follow Up**

Write a short follow-up note or email thanking them for hosting your visit. If an editorial does run, encourage library supporters in your community to write letters to the editor in support of the editorial, and be sure to forward the editorial on to your legislators!

*-- Based in part on the NYLA article "How to Schedule and Conduct an Editorial Board Meeting", [www.nyla.org](http://www.nyla.org).*

## Advocacy Resources:

### [www.flls.org/advocacy](http://www.flls.org/advocacy)

FLLS's one-stop collection of advocacy news and resources.

### [www.nyla.org](http://www.nyla.org) / (518)432-6952 / [info@nyla.org](mailto:info@nyla.org)

The New York Library Association (NYLA) is the voice of the library community in New York. They advocate on behalf of all libraries and library staff to the state legislature and serve as the spokesperson on library matters to the media and public policymakers.

NYLA sets our legislative priorities and coordinates the statewide Library Lobby Day, Snapshot Day, and "Take Action" Legislative Alerts. They also offer numerous advocacy resources and tools on their website.

### [www.protectnylibraries.org](http://www.protectnylibraries.org)

The *NY Libraries: Essential* campaign, coordinated by NYLA.

### [www.ala.org/advocacy](http://www.ala.org/advocacy)

The American Library Association (ALA) offers extensive resources for advocacy and legislation issues, including an online "Advocacy University".

## Additional Advocacy Contacts:

Didi Barrett, Chair of the Assembly Committee on Libraries and Education Technology

*Represents library interests in the NYS Assembly*

District Office: 518-828-1961, Albany Office: 518-455-5177

[barrettd@nyassembly.gov](mailto:barrettd@nyassembly.gov) · <http://nyassembly.gov/mem/Didi-Barrett>

Patty Richie, Chair of the Senate Committee on Libraries

*Represents library interests in the NYS Senate*

District Office: (315)782-3418, Albany Office: 518-455-3438

[Richie@nysenate.gov](mailto:Richie@nysenate.gov) · [www.nysenate.gov/committee/libraries](http://www.nysenate.gov/committee/libraries)

Bernie Margolis, NYS Librarian & Assistant Commissioner on Libraries

(518)474-5930

[bmargolis@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:bmargolis@mail.nysed.gov)

