



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Siela A. Bynoe

Senator Siela A. Bynoe Holds First Senate Library Committee Meeting During National Library Week

Senator Siela A. Bynoe

April 9, 2025

ISSUE:

- [libraries](#)

COMMITTEE:

- [Libraries](#)

Advances Legislation to Protect Library Materials, Expand Access to Services, and Boost Funding

(Albany, NY) - In recognition of National Library Week (April 6 - 12), Senator Siela A. Bynoe (SD-6), Chair of the Senate Standing Committee on Libraries, convened the committee's first meeting of the 2025 legislative session on Tuesday. The committee advanced a series of bills that reflect the ever-evolving role of libraries and the many services they provide to support our entire communities.

Senator Bynoe said, “The local library is often our most accessible and trusted resource in our communities. Whether it’s connecting people to job training, helping our kids build their literacy skills early, or simply offering a safe space to learn and grow, libraries meet real needs every day. I am proud to advance this set of bills that strengthens their ability to serve, protect intellectual freedom, and bring critical services directly to the people who need them most. During this National Library Week, I encourage everyone to explore their local library!”

Legislation advanced by the Committee includes:

- **[S5494](#) (Senator Bynoe):** Creates a pilot program to hire social workers for public libraries located in disadvantaged communities.
- **[S5988](#) (Senator Bynoe):** Dedicates **\$1 million in grant funding** to public libraries offering adult employment preparation education programs.
- **[S5989](#) (Senator Bynoe):** Adds an option for parents to request a library card for their child when registering them for school, promoting early library use.
- **[S3154A](#) (Senator Cooney):** Establishes **Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library** program in New York State, providing children with free, age-appropriate books by mail each month.
- **[S6870](#) (Senator Comrie):** Creates a study on libraries’ current access to capital funding and recommends strategies for improvement.
- **[S1099](#) (Senator May):** Enacts the **“Freedom to Read Act,”** which enables school libraries to offer the widest array of appropriate books and materials available to support a diverse and quality education.
- **[S1100](#) (Senator May):** Enacts the **“Open Shelves Act”** which allows public libraries to curate their collections and develop programming reflective of many different contemporary and historic perspectives and issues.

AnnaLee Dragon, Executive Director of the New York Library Association, said: “Libraries are essential institutions that foster equity in education, bridge gaps in access to critical resources, and serve as community anchors for the neighborhoods they serve. This National Library week, as federal support for libraries wavers and threats to intellectual freedom endure, NYLA applauds the work of the New York State Senate Standing Committee on Libraries and its Chair, Senator Siela A. Bynoe, for advancing legislation intended to support libraries, library users, and the field of librarianship in this crucial moment.”

Tony Iovino, Asst. Director of Oceanside Library, said: “The local library is the one place everyone is welcome, regardless of human condition or financial ability. It’s the one place in society that provides free access to resources that empower individuals, of all ages, to improve their lives through education, personal responsibility, lifelong learning, and community interaction. I applaud Senator Bynoe and the Senate Libraries Committee for their steadfast support of New York's libraries.”

Joy Rankin, Director of Roosevelt Public Library, said: "Libraries are essential community hubs fostering literacy, education, and lifelong learning. Learning comes in many forms, but all experiences arrive to enrich our lives, and when they do we are profoundly empowered.”

###

related legislation

[2025-S5494](#)

[libraries](#)

-
- Introduced
 - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate
 - - On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate
 - - Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
 - Delivered to Governor
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[Relates to state financial aid for library social work services](#)

February 21, 2025

In Senate Committee [Finance](#)

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Aye

Nay

2025-S5988

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 - - On Floor Calendar Assembly
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• [Enables public libraries to access employment preparation education \(EPE\) funds to provide adult literacy education](#)

March 04, 2025

In Senate Committee [Finance](#)

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Aye

Nay

2025-S5989

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 - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate

- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
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-

[Relates to library cards for minors](#)

March 04, 2025

In Assembly Committee

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