



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie: New State Budget Delivers Record Funding for Libraries

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State Senator Patty Ritchie today announced that the new state budget includes record funding for public libraries, including the first increase in operating aid in three years and more than doubling funds available for long-needed construction and expansion of individual libraries across the state.

“Communities depend on local libraries to educate and empower residents through various programs and services for all ages,” said Senator Ritchie, who represents more than 50 local

libraries across Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties and serves as chair of the Senate's Library Committee. "I am thrilled to have secured this funding that our libraries need to not only be an information provider, but to become more energy efficient, become more handicap accessible and support the changing and growing demands for technology."

"Our state's public, school, and academic libraries serve as indispensable educational resources in every community, for every New Yorker," New York Library Association Director of Government Relations Mike Neppel said. "Thanks to Senator Ritchie's leadership, proposed funding cuts to library services were not only reversed, but additional funding was secured to improve local library services statewide. New Yorkers are incredibly lucky to have Senator Ritchie fighting on behalf of their local libraries and library systems."

The State Budget restores \$4 million in cuts originally proposed by the Governor, and adds an additional \$1 million in operating support, the first year-to-year increase in three years. In addition, it adds \$20 million above what the Governor originally proposed for capital construction at individual libraries, for a total of \$34 million in funding.

This funding announcement comes on the heels of the New York State Senate passing a bill sponsored by Senator Ritchie that would help libraries more easily afford smaller construction projects. The bill ([S.3022-A](#)) allows small libraries to bundle together small capital projects and jointly submit them to the state for financing. In that way, libraries could enjoy lower financing costs, saving taxpayers' money and ensuring small libraries resources they need to make critical improvements.