



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

# NEW YORK STATE SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LIBRARIES



**SENATOR**  
**SEAN M. RYAN**  
CHAIR



**CHAIR**  
Libraries

**COMMITTEES**

Commerce, Economic Development  
and Small Business  
Crime Victims, Crime and Correction  
Education  
Health  
Housing, Construction and  
Community Development  
Labor

**THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK**



**SENATOR  
SEAN M. RYAN  
60<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT**

**ALBANY OFFICE:**  
944 Legislative Office Bldg.  
Albany, New York 12247  
Phone: (518) 455-3240  
Fax: (518) 426-6738

**DISTRICT OFFICE:**  
60 Lakefront Boulevard  
Suite 125  
Buffalo, New York 14202  
Phone: (716) 854-8705  
Fax: (716) 854-3051

**EMAIL:** [ryan@nysenate.gov](mailto:ryan@nysenate.gov)

December 17, 2021

The Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
Temporary President and Majority Leader  
New York State Senate  
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Senator Stewart-Cousins:

I am pleased to transmit the Annual Report of the Senate's Standing Committee on Libraries for the 2021 Legislative Session. As Chair, I am proud to continue to lead our efforts to address important matters under my committee's jurisdiction. During the 2021 session, this committee met three times in session and reported seven bills. The Committee also held one roundtable with libraries across the state.

I thank my colleagues who served on the Committee for their efforts and support of the work that was done in the committee this year, and I thank you for the continued support from the Majority Conference in the committee's operations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sean M. Ryan".

Sean M. Ryan  
New York State Senator, 60th District

**2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT**

**NEW YORK STATE SENATE  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON LIBRARIES**

**Senator Ryan, Chairperson**

Committee Members

Majority Members Senator Jabari Brisport Senator John E. Brooks Senator Brad Hoylman Senator José M. Serrano	Minority Members Senator Daphne Jordan, <i>Ranking Member</i> Senator Daniel G. Stec
--	--

Committee Staff

Cody Meyers, Chief of Staff  
Alexandra Grose, Counsel and Policy Director  
Sarah Lesser, Legislative Director  
Gabrielle Harrington, Director of Community Affairs and Policy Advisor

## **COMMITTEE JURISDICTION AND OVERVIEW**

The New York State Senate Standing Committee on Libraries has legislative oversight responsibilities for issues concerning public, academic, school and special libraries as well as the administration and funding of libraries and library systems across New York State. The Committee has endeavored to assist libraries in sustaining and upgrading their infrastructure, as well as meeting the challenges of the information age. Libraries have become modern community centers playing an integral part in the education and cultural development of New Yorkers.

New York State is home to a total of 73 library systems: 23 public library systems, nine reference and research library systems, and 40 school library systems. There are 755 public libraries statewide. Six of the 40 largest libraries in the United States are in New York, more than any other state. New York's largest library, the New York Public Library, contains over 10 million volumes and is among the top research institutions in the world. Statewide, over 19 million people utilize New York State's public library systems. From the largest library to the smallest community-based book exchange, all of New York's libraries play a vital role in our communities.

During the 2021 Legislative Session, eleven bills were referred to the Committee for its review. Of these bills, seven were reported from the Committee. Six were passed by the Senate, and five passed in both houses. This work was conducted through a series of three committee meetings. A list of all bills that were reported from the committee is provided at the end of this report.

In addition to regular meetings, the Committee held one roundtable, where libraries across the state attested to the positive impact state aid has on their ability to develop new programs and modernize their facilities.

## **COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS**

During the 2021 Session, the Libraries Committee held three meetings and one roundtable. The committee passed several bills that will increase state funding to libraries, including S.6511 (Ryan) and S.5753 (Ryan), both of which were signed by the Governor. Bill S.6511 streamlines and modernizes certain library aid formulas and program requirements for eligibility for state aid for library construction and bill S.5753 increases the percentage of total funds appropriated to a library system that may be used to support projects receiving state aid in excess of seventy-five percent.

S.3706 (Comrie) also touches upon issues of funding. This bill would require various commissioners to conduct a study on the access of state public libraries and library systems to capital funding. Bill S.3760 passed in the Senate.

Another bill that was signed by the Governor is S.4435 (May), which requires members of a board of trustees of public, free association and Indian libraries to complete two hours of trustee education annually. This will equip trustees with the tools to be better stewards of their libraries' financial resources.

Between December 14th and 16th, members of the Committee were invited to eight libraries across the state to meet with library leadership and staff. In these meetings, libraries discussed their new programs and facilities, and highlighted areas where state legislators could be of assistance over the next fiscal year.



## TWO HOUSE BILLS

In 2021, five of the eleven bills referred to the Standing Committee on Libraries passed both houses of the Legislature. The Governor has signed all five of these bills.

Bill	Sponsor	Summary	Action
S4430	<b>RYAN --</b>	Amends sections of the Education law related to library board of trustee petitioning requirements and school board petitioning requirements to reduce the number of petitions required for ballot access in the 2021 election cycle.	SIGNED, CHAPTER #70
S4435B	<b>MAY --</b>	Requires members of a board of trustees of public, free association and Indian libraries to complete two hours of trustee education annually	SIGNED, CHAPTER #468
S4818A	<b>THOMAS --</b>	Relates to the Uniondale public library district and certain dates pertaining to the annual election process and certain rights of the board in such district	SIGNED, CHAPTER #511
S5753A	<b>RYAN --</b>	Increases the percentage of total funds appropriated to a library system that may be used to support projects receiving state aid in excess of seventy-five percent	SIGNED, CHAPTER #627
S6511	<b>RYAN --</b>	Relates to state aid eligibility for library construction, and to streamline and modernize certain library aid formulas and program requirements	SIGNED, CHAPTER #563

## SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

Bill	Sponsor	Summary	Significant Action
S2715	<b>RITCHIE --</b>	Relates to the definition of the term public library	Advanced to Third Reading
S3706A	<b>COMRIE --</b>	Relates to conducting a study on the access of state public libraries and library systems to capital funding	Passed Senate
S4430	<b>RYAN --</b>	Amends sections of the Education law related to library board of trustee petitioning requirements and school board petitioning requirements to reduce the number of petitions required for ballot access in the 2021 election cycle.	Signed, Chapter #70
S4435B	<b>MAY --</b>	Requires members of a board of trustees of public, free association and Indian libraries to complete two hours of trustee education annually	Signed, Chapter #468
S4818A	<b>THOMAS --</b>	Relates to the Uniondale public library district and certain dates pertaining to the annual election process and certain rights of the board in such district	Signed, Chapter #511
S5753A	<b>RYAN --</b>	Increases the percentage of total funds appropriated to a library system that may be used to support projects receiving state aid in excess of seventy-five percent	Signed, Chapter #627
S6511	<b>RYAN --</b>	Relates to state aid eligibility for library construction, and to streamline and modernize certain library aid formulas and program requirements	Signed, Chapter #563











2021 ANNUAL REPORT

**NEW YORK STATE SENATE  
STANDING COMMITTEE**

LIBRARIES