



Annual Report 2025

New York State Senate Standing Committee on
Libraries

Senator Siela A. Bynoe

Chair

Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins
President Pro Tempore
NYS Senate Majority Leader



CHAIR
LIBRARIES
COMMITTEES
CONSUMER PROTECTION
EDUCATION
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
INVESTIGATIONS AND GOVERNMENT
OPERATIONS
MENTAL HEALTH
TRANSPORTATION

NEW YORK
STATE
SENATE



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January 7, 2026

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

Dear Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins:

I am pleased to transmit the Annual Report of the Senate's Standing Committee on Libraries for the 2025 Legislative Session. As Chair, I am proud to continue leading the Committee's work on matters within its jurisdiction and to advance policies that recognize libraries as vital community institutions that support education, access to information, and lifelong learning across New York State.

During the 2025 Legislative Session, the Committee met one time and reported nine bills. Of these measures, two were chaptered into law, four passed the Senate, and three were reported to the calendar. This work reflects the Committee's ongoing commitment to strengthening library systems and ensuring they remain responsive to the evolving needs of the communities they serve.

I thank my colleagues who served on the Committee for their dedication and collaboration throughout the Session, and I extend my appreciation to the Majority Conference for its continued support of the Committee's operations and its shared commitment to sustaining and supporting libraries statewide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Siela A. Bynoe".

Siela A. Bynoe
New York State Senator
Chair, Committee on Libraries

2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

NEW YORK STATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LIBRARIES

**Senator Siela A. Bynoe,
Chairperson**

Committee Members

Jabari Brisport

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Sean M. Ryan

José M. Serrano

Dean Murray, Ranking Member

James N. Tedisco

Committee Staff

Wynton Graise – Legislative Director

Thalia Clerveau – Chief of Staff

Andrew Quintero – Deputy Chief of Staff

COMMITTEE JURISDICTION AND OVERVIEW

The New York State Senate Standing Committee on Libraries exercises legislative oversight over matters affecting public, academic, school, and special libraries, including the governance, administration, and funding of library systems throughout New York State. The Committee plays a central role in shaping policies that support libraries as essential public institutions that promote education, digital access, workforce development, and civic engagement in communities across the State.

Throughout the 2025 Legislative Session, the Committee focused on strengthening the capacity of libraries to meet evolving community needs, particularly as libraries continue to serve as hubs for learning, information access, and public services. In carrying out its oversight responsibilities, the Committee reviewed legislation addressing library operations, funding eligibility, and access to services, with an emphasis on ensuring that library systems remain responsive, equitable, and sustainable.

During the 2025 Legislative Session, fourteen bills were referred to the Committee for consideration. Of those measures, nine were reported from the Committee for further legislative action. Four bills were passed by the Senate, and three were enacted by both houses of the Legislature. This legislative work was conducted during one committee meeting. A complete list of bills reported from the Committee is included at the conclusion of this report.

COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

The following key bills were acted on by the Committee in 2025:

During the 2025 Session, the Libraries Committee held one meeting. One of the bills reported from the Committee relates to library cards for minors, S5989 (BYNOE): Requires school districts to establish a method by which a parent may request a local library card for their minor child on school registration forms.

Another bill that was reported is S5494 (BYNOE). Bill S5494 creates a program to award State financial aid for social work services to be provided in libraries located in economically disadvantaged communities to enhance and expand access to services in places where individuals seek assistance and resources. Senator Bynoe was able to secure pilot funds for this program.

The third bill, which passed both houses, S1099 (MAY), was vetoed by the Governor. This bill would have enacted the “freedom to read act”; requiring the commissioner of education and school library systems to develop policies to ensure that school libraries and library staff are empowered to curate and develop collections that provide students with access to the widest array of developmentally appropriate materials available.

TWO HOUSE BILLS

In 2025, three of the fourteen bills referred to the Standing Committee on Libraries passed both houses of the Legislature. Of these bills, the Governor has signed two and vetoed one.

BILL	SPONSOR	SUMMARY	SIGNIFICANT ACT
S.01099	MAY	Enacts the "freedom to read act"; requires the commissioner of education and school library systems to develop policies to ensure that school libraries and library staff are empowered to curate and develop collections that provide students with access to the widest array of developmentally appropriate materials available.	Vetoed Memorandum 136
S.07932	MAYER	Changes the number of members of the board of trustees of the Mamaroneck public library district from eleven to no less than five and no more than fifteen.	Chaptered 561
S.07967	CANZONERI-FITZPATRICK	Includes the Island Park Public Library as an eligible library for the financing of projects through the dormitory authority.	Chaptered 359

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

BILL	SPONSOR	SUMMARY	SIGNIFICANT ACT
S.01099	MAY	Enacts the “freedom to read act”; requires the commissioner of education and school library systems to develop policies to ensure that school libraries and library staff are empowered to curate and develop collections that provide students with access to the widest array of developmentally appropriate materials available.	Vetoed Memorandum 136
S.01100A	MAY	Ensures that library staff of free association, public, and hospital libraries, and with certain advice, Indian libraries, are able to develop collections, services, and programming that reflect the values and protections established under the human rights law and the equal rights amendment to the state constitution.	Passed the Senate
S.03154A	COONEY	Directs the office of children and family services to establish Dolly Parton’s statewide imagination library program for encouraging children from birth to five years of age, inclusive, to develop a love of reading and learning; directs the office of children and family services to promote the statewide development of local Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library programs; advance and strengthen local Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library programs with the goal of increasing enrollment; recruit volunteers to assist in the development, promotion, and coordination of local Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library programs; solicit donations, gifts, and other funding to financially support local Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library programs; develop community engagement; develop, promote, and coordinate a public awareness campaign to make donors aware of the opportunity to donate to the affiliate programs and make the public aware of the opportunity to register eligible children to receive books through the program; administer the local match requirement and coordinate the collection and remittance of local program costs for books and mailing; and develop statewide marketing and communication plans; establishes the imagination library of New York fund.	Reported to Senate Finance
S.05494	BYNOE	Creates a program to award state financial aid for social work services to be provided in libraries located in economically disadvantaged communities to enhance and expand access to services in places where individuals seek assistance and resources.	Reported to Senate Finance

S.05988	BYNOE	Enables public libraries to access employment preparation education (EPE) funds to provide adult literacy education; sets aside one million dollars to be awarded through a competitive grant process; provides that half of such appropriation shall be set aside for libraries serving a population of one million or more.	Reported to Senate Finance
S.05989A	BYNOE	Requires school districts to establish a method by which a parent may request a local library card for their minor child on the school registration form.	Passed the Senate
S.06870	COMRIE	Relates to conducting a study on the access of state public libraries and library systems to capital funding; provides the department of education, in consultation with the dormitory authority, the office of the state comptroller, and the public library systems of the state, shall assess and report on the capital needs of such public library systems, including public libraries and association libraries.	Passed the Senate

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