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BUFFALO – Thursday, August 29th, New York State Senator Chris Jacobs joined Chairman of the New York State Assembly *Libraries and Educational Technology Committee* Assemblyman Sean Ryan and Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Director Mary Jean Jakubowski to announce \$34 Million dollars in *State Aid for Library Construction*, including \$1,063,552 of which will be used for interior renovations and ADA compliance restrooms and a new elevator at the Crane Branch of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library.

Jacobs and Ryan lead a bipartisan effort to restore library aid funding to the state budget after initial proposals called for a \$20 million dollar reduction. Their efforts ensured libraries in Western New York and across New York State will continue to serve as cultural hubs that provide vital services to our communities. This funding will be used to update infrastructure, upgrade computer and broadband technologies, provide meeting spaces to accommodate community needs and to renovate for accessibility to library users with disabilities.

Senator Jacobs also furthered this commitment to libraries by announcing he has secured \$250,000 in additional state funding for the ADA compliance project at the Crane Library. This funding will ensure the Crane Branch is accessible to everyone in the community who wishes to use the vast resources offered by the library.

“From preserving our history to opening up new worlds, libraries do so much to enhance the quality of life and learning for residents of all ages, therefore their continued support must be a priority,” said State Senator Chris Jacobs. “I am very pleased to have been able to work in a bipartisan fashion to restore critical library infrastructure monies that will enable this popular landmark library to continue to grow their service and program offerings while ensuring access for everyone in our community.”

“This is vital funding that will allow the Crane Branch to continue to serve the Elmwood Village and our community as a whole for decades to come,” said Assembly Committee on Libraries and Education Technology Chairman Sean Ryan. “Libraries have continued to grow and evolve with the development of new technologies. As a result of that growth, we’ve seen libraries across the state trying to fit expanded technology and programming into spaces that were not designed for the needs of today’s patron. This funding shows our commitment to ensuring libraries can make critical upgrades that will allow them to grow existing programs, increase accessibility and enhance the technological services they offer to our communities. Libraries provide an environment for lifelong learning and I’m proud to have worked with my partners in government on both sides of the aisle to make sure this vital funding was included in the state budget.”

“We are grateful for the support of our elected officials and thank them for recognizing the importance of providing funding to the *State Aid for Library Construction* program,” said Library Director Mary Jean Jakubowski. “Updating our older library buildings is critical. These funds support library services being requested by our communities. The Crane Branch sits in a very active neighborhood and is used extensively. The planned renovations will allow for more children’s and adult programming, provide ADA access to the 2nd floor and update the restrooms to be both family-friendly and gender neutral. We look forward to working with the City of Buffalo, who owns the building, to bring these renovations to fruition.”

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