



ASSEMBLYMAN SEAN RYAN

New York's 149th Assembly District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RYAN CALLS FOR \$37 MILLION IN ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR LIBRARIES IN FINAL NEW YORK STATE BUDGET

KENMORE, N.Y. – Today, February 21, 2020, New York State Assemblyman and Chairman of the Assembly Libraries and Education Technology Committee Sean Ryan was joined by Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Director Mary Jean Jakubowski and Town of Tonawanda Public Library Director Mary Muscarella in his call for a \$37 million increase in funding to New York State Libraries from the levels proposed in the Governor's 2020-21 Budget. Assemblyman Ryan is proposing an investment of \$97.6 million in State Library aid and \$45 million to Library Construction Aid be included in the Assembly One House Budget that will be proposed ahead of negotiations with the Senate and Governor. The Governor's Proposed Budget would see \$25 million in cuts to library funding, which would have a dramatic impact on library infrastructure and services across New York State.

The Executive Budget calls for a \$20 million reduction in Library Construction Aid in the 2021 Fiscal Year. With public library construction needs estimated at over \$1.5 billion statewide from 2021-2025, this would be a devastating cut to public libraries. The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library system alone anticipates over \$119 million in necessary capital needs over the next 5 years. These include ADA compliance projects and desperately needed infrastructure projects like replacing aging roofs, windows and HVAC systems. Assemblyman Ryan has proposed the Assembly include \$45 million in Library Construction Aid in the Assembly One House Budget, an \$11 million increase over 2019-20 funding.

A \$5 million cut in Library State Aid was also proposed in the Executive Budget. Ryan is recommending the Assembly contributes an additional \$6 million over the proposed Executive Budget level of \$91.6 million. A cut to Library State Aid would drastically impact the level of services provided by libraries across New York State.

Ryan also released a report showing the continued need for capital improvements to libraries across Erie County. Ryan's report shows that from 2021-2025, Erie County libraries will need nearly \$120,000,000 to

support capital improvement projects. This report demonstrates the continued importance of investing in New York State Library Construction Aid.

“New York’s libraries are community hubs that provide critical services to our citizens,” said Assemblyman Sean Ryan. “The dramatic cuts in library funding proposed in the Executive Budget would be devastating to communities and libraries around the state. Investments in our libraries are investments in our communities, and I will be working with all parties to ensure we continue to invest in our libraries in the 2020-21 budget.”

“We appreciate Assemblyman Sean Ryan’s leadership and ongoing support for libraries across New York State; particularly recognizing the needs of libraries locally,” said Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Director Mary Jean Jakubowski. “We are hopeful that New York lawmakers support the Assemblyman’s proposals because an investment in libraries is an investment in the entire community.”

Ryan made his announcement at the Kenmore Branch Library on Delaware Road along with Trustees of the Town of Tonawanda Public Library System in attendance. The Kenmore Library is currently undergoing a project, funded in part by \$121,533 in Library Construction Aid, for the creation of a flexible meeting space, ADA compliant sidewalks and replacement of a boiler system.

The final New York State Budget is expected to be passed by April 1, 2020.

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Assemblyman Sean Ryan represents New York's 149th Assembly District, which includes portions of the Cities of Buffalo and Lackawanna, the Town of Hamburg, and the Villages of Hamburg and Blasdell. For more information, please contact Assemblyman Ryan's Buffalo office at 716-885-9630.