

New York's Library Systems -- Essential for New York's Libraries

New York State Library systems have been hard-hit during the current economic downturn with a net loss of 25 million dollars (or 25%) during the last three years - a draconian reduction that far exceeds what other state-supported services have been asked to absorb. The impact of the reduced state aid and revenue has impacted the services that library systems have been able to provide its member libraries and more importantly reduced the systems' ability to support the needs of local communities. In Western New York (WNY), the three public library systems, the five school library systems, and the regional library system have all been impacted tremendously by the reduction in state funding; impacting more than 550 public, school, academic, hospital, corporate, and special libraries located in six of the eight Western New York counties including: Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, and Orleans. Reductions in system staffing, services, and programs have had a dire impact on the flow of information and provision of tools and infrastructure that assist our citizens to: locate jobs, help our children and young adults in the classroom, locate information on health concerns, conduct research, keep our seniors stay connected and support economic development.

Cuts in Library Aid fall heaviest upon library systems; which serve as the backbone of our information infrastructure, and provide the cost-sharing, joint services and collaborative approach that save libraries and constituencies, YOUR constituencies, money. Library systems ensure equitable access for all New Yorkers no matter the size or type of library they serve.

Three public library systems, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System, and the NIOGA Library System and their members service the 1.5 million residents who live and work in Western New York. Each of these Systems has been greatly impacted by the loss of state funding. Critical services such as delivery, purchase of materials, subscriptions to electronic resources, provision of remote information services, and offerings of library programming has been drastically reduced and in some cases eliminated. The loss of nearly \$1,000,000 in state aid to these systems has caused a greater financial shift to local municipalities for support of critical services for seniors, college students, young adults and children. As New York municipalities continue to be more cash strapped due to increases in meditated programs, and as library systems continue to lose critical state and local support, libraries are being forced to reduce hours and close their doors.

The Western New York Library Resources Council, one of nine regional systems across the State, provides services to all types of libraries including public and schools, has had to reduce or in some cases eliminate services to its members in the areas of continuing education, grant programs, and support services. Additionally, area hospitals rely on information services provided through the Western New York Library Resources Council managed Hospital Library Services Program (HLSP) and the Medical Information Subsidy Program (MISP). These

programs assist acute care hospitals in providing critical care services using the latest technology and medicines. The reductions in this state funded program have drastically reduced the dollars available to secure the latest research and information and caused a reduction in staff that provides this information to health care providers. The Western New York Library Resources Council also provides professional development and training opportunities to all libraries within the Western New York Region. Most importantly, the Council provides its members with the opportunity to collaboratively explore alternative services models and learn about new and emerging technologies that Western New York constituents are seeking.

Academic libraries, too, have been impacted by cuts to state funding that Western New York Library Resources Council oversees. The Coordinated Collection Development Aid program has been reduced by more than 15% since 2007/2008. Academic libraries have had to decrease the purchases of important thematic resources that assist students, faculty, and researchers in conducting research on issues related to engineering, medicine, law, business, and social issues to name a few.

On behalf of the Boards of Trustees, System Administrations and Staff of the Western New York Libraries, I would like to thank the New York State legislature for supporting legislation that decreased the percentage of matching funds needed by local municipalities in impoverished areas of NYS for securing library construction aid. We are also appreciative that the amount of funding was not decreased for 2011/2012. However, local municipal libraries are also under great strain due to the budget cuts at the local level, increase in operations costs particularly with pensions, health insurance, materials, and electronic resources rising beyond the cost of inflation.

It is therefore important a public library system like the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System be able to move away from a municipal library and put its fate into the hands of the voters by creating a special legislative district public library which will in essence reduce its current governance structure from 23 independent government agencies to 1 and secure long term financial stability. We kindly ask for your support in this endeavor as well.

Lastly, we ask that you don't penalize New York's Library Systems and their members - the one group which throughout their history has unquestionably used economies of scale to effectively consolidate and collaborate services. In fact, it may be appropriate to suggest library systems be used as an example to other agencies and industries of how working together can leverage municipal and state funding.


New York State Assembly Committee on Libraries and Educational Technologies
November 29, 2011
Presentation by Western New York Library Systems

Thank you for your time.


Attached are charts that demonstrate the reductions in state funding to Western New York Library Systems.

Please help us to secure our future for the residents of Western New York. Reinstate funding to libraries.

Respectively Submitted,


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System: Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (Public)							
Fiscal year	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	Dollar change	Percent Change
System State Aid	\$1,867,356	\$1,817,006	\$1,609,779	\$1,561,443	\$1,461,173	(\$406,183)	(21.75%)
Local Services Support State Aid	\$214,009	\$205,667	\$182,523	\$177,043	\$165,674	(\$ 48,335)	(22.59%)
Local Library Services Aid	\$299,616	\$291,040	\$258,288	\$250,533	\$234,444	(\$ 65,172)	(21.75%)
Other State Aid Programs	\$731,159	\$710,890	\$630,473	\$611,042	\$572,272	(\$ 158,887)	(21.73%)
Other Funding	\$25,712,324	\$27,143,232	\$25,768,374	\$28,757,494	\$19,092,405	(\$6,619,919)	(25.75%)
TOTAL	\$28,824,464	\$30,167,835	\$28,449,437	\$31,357,555	\$21,525,968	(\$7,298,496)	(25.32%)
Lost/gain positions	Since 2008, B&ECPLS has lost 65 FTE positions (15%)						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other State Aid programs: includes funding for non-competitive state aid (Central Library, Coordinated Outreach, etc) • Losses in State Aid have required the B&ECPL to provide fewer system-wide programs for children, young adults, adults and seniors. • Outreach programs to local businesses have decreased. • A reduced number of system-wide resources are being purchased. • Database access is reduced. • Other funding includes Erie County Property Tax Levy plus additional revenues. 						

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System: Western New York Library Resources Council (NY3Rs)							
Fiscal year	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012 (to date)	Dollar Change	Percent Change
General Operating and automation (Basic and RBDB) State Aid	\$667,795	\$657,435	\$584,301	\$564,311	\$330,217	(\$337,578)	(51.0%) Please note: we have not received remaining aid (RBDB and \$10,000 due to an error at DLD)
State Aid to Hospital Libraries (HSLP and MISP)	\$188,902	\$212,284	\$176,185	\$166,449	\$39,628	(\$149,274)	(79.0%) Please note: we have not received remaining aid (HSLP)
Other funding	\$81,943	\$56,205	\$50,742	\$52,607	\$38,188	(\$ 43,755)	(53.0%)
State Aid to Academic Libraries (CCDA)	\$162,137	\$163,402	\$159,713	\$138,025	\$138,291	(\$ 23,846)	(15.0%)
TOTAL	\$1,100,777	\$1,089,326	\$970,941	\$921,392	\$546,324	(\$554,453)	(50.0%)
Impact on Services to Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in grants to member libraries for technology projects: \$81,558 to \$65,000 in 2010 which is a 20% reduction in support of member libraries Reduction in basic grants to hospital libraries for purchase of resources: \$47,500 to \$19,600 for a 58% reduction depending on if we receive our final HSLP payment – otherwise a 100% reduction. MISP funding for electronic purchases and lending reimbursements for hospital libraries: \$56,571 to \$39,628 for a reduction of 30%. 13 FTE in 2007/2008 reduced to 10 FTE in 2011/2012 in a net loss of 3 FT 						
System: Nioga Library System (Public)							
Fiscal year	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	Dollar Change	Percent Change
System State Aid	\$ 685,070	\$ 671,369	\$ 621,575	\$ 623,303	\$ 536,055	(\$149,015)	(22.0%)
Local Services Support State Aid	82,005	79,053	70,154	67,298	57,310	(\$ 24,695)	(30.0%)
Additional funding	263,290	248,125	188,275	165,841	206,019	(\$ 57,271)	(22.0%)
TOTAL	1,030,365	998,547	880,004	856,175	799,384	(\$ 230,981)	(22.0%)
Lost/gain positions	FTE Staff reduced by 35%						

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System: Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System (Public)							
Fiscal year	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	Dollar Change	Percent Change
System State Aid	\$755,427	\$740,318	\$647,840	\$628,384	\$588,036	(\$167,391)	(22.0%)
Local Services Support State Aid	\$72,368	\$69,968	\$61,803	\$59,288	\$50,488	(\$21,880)	(30.0%)
Additional funding	\$544,595	644,800	465,886	401,132	\$376,192	(\$168,403)	(30.0%)
Total	\$1,204,999	\$1,343,157	\$1,175,529	\$1,088,804	\$1,014,716	(\$1,090,283)	(15.0%)
Lost/gain positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff reduced by 34% 						