

NEW YORK STATE
A S S E M B L Y

SHELDON SILVER, SPEAKER



committee on
Libraries and Education Technology
Jonathan L. Bing, Chair



Annual Report 2010



JONATHAN L. BING
Member of Assembly
73RD District

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ALBANY

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December 15, 2010

The Honorable Sheldon Silver
Speaker of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 349
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Speaker Silver:

I am honored to present to you the Annual Report for the Standing Committee on Libraries and Education Technology for the 2010 legislative session. It is my privilege to serve as Chair of this Committee and I look forward to working with you and the rest of my colleagues to continue providing much needed support and assistance to New York's library community.

The Assembly Majority and the Committee on Libraries and Education Technology are dedicated to working to maintain resources for the libraries of New York State. Unfortunately, 2010 has been a very difficult economic time for New York. In the 2010-11 State Budget, the Executive proposed a \$2.4 million reduction in Aid to Public Libraries. Regrettably, the Assembly was not able to restore this reduction in funding. However, the Assembly's budget did continue to provide \$8 million in formula supplemental grants for library systems. In addition, language was included in the budget to ensure that the appropriations for libraries and library systems are reduced proportionately, assuring that all programs will continue to receive funding. Finally, the Assembly's budget provided \$14 million in funding to continue statewide library capital projects for the fifth consecutive year. Sadly, the Executive vetoed the Education, Labor, and Family Assistance (ELFA) Article VII bill which contains provisions that are crucial to ensuring the fair and equitable distribution of State funding to libraries and library systems across New York State.

In spite of the incredibly difficult economic times we are currently facing, the Committee was able to advance some very important legislation. A main legislative priority for the Committee was A.6154-B, which allows libraries and library systems

to cooperatively bid for equipment, supplies, and services. The Committee also reported several pieces of local legislation for libraries across the State. One of these local bills, A.8851 expands the service area of the Seymour Public Library District. Another local bill, A.10634-B, amends various provisions relating to the operation of the D.R. Evarts Library District, allowing the library to function more easily. All three of the above mentioned bills were passed by the Assembly and signed into law by the Executive.

Our State's libraries offer a range of essential services to the public, including Internet access, literacy programs and research materials, and employ staff with the skills to support these services. The Assembly Majority has made it a priority to secure the funding necessary to help libraries maintain these services. I look forward to the upcoming session as we continue to work to ensure that our libraries get the support they need.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Committee, as well as all of the members of the Assembly Majority, for their commitment and dedication to the work of the Committee. I would also like to thank you for your unwavering support of this Committee on these important issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan L. Bing". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "B".

Jonathan L. Bing
Member of Assembly

2010 ANNUAL REPORT

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON LIBRARIES
AND EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY**

Jonathan L. Bing, Chair

Committee Members

Majority

Michael Benjamin
Barbara M. Clark
Susan V. John
David Koon
Grace Meng
Kenneth Zebrowski

Minority

Philip M. Boyle
Marcus J. Molinaro

Staff

Mark Casellini, Assistant Secretary for Program and Policy
Lindsey Facteau, Legislative Analyst
Suzanne Bolling, Associate Counsel
Nicholas DeCaprio, Committee Clerk
Laura Inglis, Program and Counsel Executive Secretary

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I. COMMITTEE JURISDICTION

The Libraries and Education Technology Committee was created in 1997 under the leadership of Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver. The Committee has jurisdiction over legislation introduced concerning the many issues affecting public, academic, school and private libraries. The Committee develops and reviews legislation affecting the administration and funding of libraries and library systems across New York State. As today's explosion in information technology has placed new demands on libraries, we are mindful of our responsibility to ensure that New York's libraries will be able to meet the challenges of the information age. The work done by the Committee assists libraries to sustain the infrastructure and staff resources necessary to allow all New Yorkers access to technological advances available through New York's vast library community.

Libraries are integral to the educational and cultural development of all New Yorkers. Through a wealth of electronic and print media, New York's libraries provide individuals and communities with exposure to information that broadens their intellectual, social and cultural experiences. New York State has over 7,000 libraries that serve our citizens in many capacities. Many of these libraries are among the largest and the best in the country. Of the forty largest libraries in the United States, six are located in New York, more than in any other State. New York's largest library, the New York Public Library, contains over ten million volumes and is among the top research institutions in the world. Among New York's most cherished resources, our libraries provide support for all those in search of information, knowledge, enlightenment or inspiration, whether they are students, teachers, researchers, academicians, authors, readers, job seekers, entrepreneurs or consumers.

As libraries are called upon to play an expanding role in educating New Yorkers, it is imperative that our libraries receive the attention and support they require to answer the call as we move forward in the 21st century.

II. PROVIDING LIBRARIES WITH NECESSARY RESOURCES

The libraries of New York State work hard to meet the needs of the populations that they serve. However, those needs may vary widely, even within one district. Public, academic and school libraries cannot serve their patrons without an adequate and reliable source of funding. The New York State Assembly has long supported libraries and the educational, cultural and economic roles they play in their communities. The Assembly Majority is committed to providing libraries with resources to meet the needs of all of our state's citizens. Providing these resources requires a well-focused policy commitment as well as significant state financial support.

The Assembly has made increased funding for New York's libraries a priority. To meet the funding needs of New York libraries, Chapter 917 of 1990 was enacted, establishing a formula which was designed to provide stable funding for both library systems and individual libraries based on the most current census figures. Unfortunately, from 1998 until 2006, Governor Pataki left funding rates for libraries unadjusted, leaving New York's libraries and library systems severely underfunded. With each year that funding remained stagnant, libraries and library systems lost valuable buying power and the ability to expand and respond to the growing needs of their communities. However, in 2007 and 2008, the Assembly worked to ensure that an extraordinary amount of additional funding was made available to libraries and library systems across the State. Libraries and library systems were once again funded at current census levels.

In 2009 and 2010, New York State has faced incredibly difficult economic times. As a result, the Executive has proposed several reductions in funding for libraries and library systems. In the 2010-11 State Budget, the Executive proposed a \$2.4 million reduction in Aid to Public Libraries. Because of the challenging fiscal times, the Assembly was forced to accept this decrease in funding. However, the Assembly was able to continue to provide \$8 million in formula supplemental grants for library systems. These funds come at a critical time, as library systems are cutting back on much-needed services. In addition, language was included in the budget to ensure that the appropriations for libraries and library systems are reduced proportionately, assuring that all programs will continue to receive funding. Finally, the Assembly's budget provided \$14 million in funding to continue statewide library capital projects. This is the fifth consecutive year that the Assembly has provided this level of funding for library construction. These construction funds have come at a crucial time for libraries, as nearly half of the state's library buildings are 50 or more years old. Regrettably, the Executive vetoed the Education, Labor, and Family Assistance (ELFA) Article VII bill which contains provisions that are crucial to ensuring the fair and equitable distribution of State funding to libraries and library systems across New York State.

The final budget for Fiscal Year 2010-11 provided \$84.458 million in aid for libraries and library systems. This is an approximate decrease of 2.7% from the Fiscal Year 2009-10 budget allocation of \$86.8 million.

In spite of the difficult economic times we are currently facing, the Committee was able to advance some very important local legislation for the library community across New York State.

Local library legislation

A.5865, McKeivitt This bill would require that, for the purposes of allocating tax levies among the classes for the Carle Place Public Library funding district, the local base proportions and the adjusted base proportions of such classes be calculated using the proportions for the 2003 tax year. This bill was reported to the Assembly Ways and Means Committee.

A.6435-A, Jaffee This bill would repeal and re-create the Orangetown Public Library District to require that each member library individually submit its own budget proposal to the town. In addition, this bill would permit the town board to exercise its discretion with respect to all appropriations adopted for each library for the ensuing year. This bill was reported to the Assembly Rules Committee.

A.8851, Finch; Chapter 310 of 2010 This law expands the service area of the Seymour Public Library District to include individuals living in the portion of the town of Fleming located within the boundaries of the Auburn Enlarged City School District subject to a referendum of the voters.

A.10213, Montesano; Chapter 356 of 2010 This law extends the time period for the Nassau Library System to establish the Brookville Library Funding District from January 1, 2010 to January 1, 2012.

A.10355-B, Gordon; Chapter 417 of 2010 This law authorizes the Brunswick Community Library, currently a free association library, to re-charter as a special district public library subject to a referendum of the voters.

A.10634-B, P. Lopez; Chapter 501 of 2010 This law amends various provisions relating to the operation of the D.R. Evarts Library District.

III. IMPROVING AND EXPANDING NEW YORK STATE LIBRARIES

New Yorkers are fortunate to have one of the richest assortments of library resources in the nation. Even when resources are limited, New York maintains hundreds of chartered public or association libraries, 23 public library systems, nine reference and research library systems and numerous specialized libraries. In addition, 42 school library systems serve the over 1,400 school libraries located in elementary and secondary schools. From the New York Public Library, nationally recognized as one of the top research libraries in the world, to the smallest community-based book exchange, libraries play a vital role in the lives of New Yorkers.

The Assembly Libraries and Education Technology Committee considered legislation in 2010 designed to expand and improve libraries throughout New York State.

Increased funding for libraries

A.3895, Lifton This bill would amend Section 1 of Article XI of the New York State Constitution to require that the Legislature provide for the maintenance and support of a system of free public libraries where all residents of New York may be provided with public library services. This bill was reported to the Assembly Ways and Means Committee.

Cooperative Bidding

A.6154-B, Paulin; Chapter 385 of 2010 This law will allow the Board of Trustees of any two or more public libraries, public library systems, or reference and research library resources systems to cooperatively bid for equipment, supplies, and services.

Public Library Construction Grant Program

A.6155-D, Paulin This bill would include the acquisition of vacant land within the scope of construction projects that are eligible for State aid. In addition, this bill would allow libraries that serve economically disadvantaged communities, as defined in the legislation, to be eligible to receive State aid for up to seventy-five percent of the approved total project costs. Under current law, all libraries are eligible to receive up to fifty percent of the approved total project costs. This bill was reported to the Assembly Ways and Means Committee.

Local Government Efficiency Grants

A.10412, Bing This bill would add public library systems to the list of municipalities that are eligible to apply for the Local Government Efficiency Grants. This bill was reported to the Assembly Ways and Means Committee.

Distribution of Public Library Information

A.11036-A, Bing This bill would require school districts outside of New York City to distribute informational materials about the local public library to students enrolled in the school district.

IV. COMMITTEE OUTLOOK FOR 2011

In the 2011 legislative session, the Committee's top priority will be to remain focused on maintaining library aid, including library construction aid. While the economic climate is currently unfavorable for expansion of state projects, it is essential to provide libraries with adequate resources. Additional goals for the 2011 session will include working to infuse funding into projects such as the Statewide Internet Library and the Talking Book and Braille Library, as well as examining library systems aid.

APPENDIX A

**SUMMARY OF ACTION ON ALL BILLS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON
LIBRARIES AND EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY**

<u>FINAL ACTION</u>	<u>ASSEMBLY BILLS</u>	<u>SENATE BILLS</u>	<u>TOTAL BILLS</u>
<u>Bills Reported With or Without Amendment</u>			
To Floor; not returning to Committee	1	0	1
To Floor; Recommitted and Died	0	0	0
To Ways and Means Committee	10	0	10
To Codes Committee	0	0	0
To Rules Committee	0	0	0
To Judiciary Committee	0	0	0
Total	11	0	11
<u>Bills Having Committee Reference Changed</u>			
To Ways and Means	1	0	1
Total	1	0	1
<u>Senate Bills Substituted or Recalled</u>			
Substituted		1	1
Recalled		0	0
Total		1	1
<u>Bills Defeated in Committee</u>	0	0	0
<u>Bills Never Reported, Held in Committee</u>	4	0	4
<u>Bills Never Reported, Died in Committee</u>	23	1	24
<u>Bills Having Enacting Clause Stricken</u>	0	0	0
<u>Motion to Discharge Lost</u>	0	0	0
<u>TOTAL BILLS IN COMMITTEE</u>	39	2	41
TOTAL NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD	3		

**APPENDIX B
CHAPTERS OF 2010**

Bill Number/Sponsor	Chapter Number	Description
A.6154-B/ Paulin	Chap. 385	Allows libraries and library systems to cooperatively bid for equipment, supplies, and services.
A.8851/ Finch	Chap. 310	Expands the service area of the Seymour Public Library District.
A.10213/ Montesano	Chap. 356	Extends the time period for the Nassau Library System to establish the Brookville Library Funding District.
A.10355-B/ Gordon	Chap. 417	Changes the Brunswick Community Library from a free association library to a special district library.
A.10634-B/ P. Lopez	Chap. 501	Amends various provisions relating to D.R. Evarts Library District.