



New York State Assembly

Sheldon Silver
Speaker



2013

ANNUAL REPORT

Committee on
**Libraries and
Education Technology**

Micah Z. Kellner
Chairman





MICAH Z. KELLNER
Assembly Member, 76th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIRMAN
Libraries & Education Technology Committee
COMMITTEES
Banks
Cities
Consumer Affairs and Protection
Racing and Wagering
Steering

December 15, 2013

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 2013 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 provide 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 increase resources for the libraries of New York State. The enacted budget for 2013-14 provided \$86.927 million in state aid for libraries and library systems. This is an increase of \$4 million from the 2012-13 budget allocation of \$82.927 million. The budget also included an increase of \$172,000 for the Conservation and Preservation Program and the Talking Book and Braille Library bringing their total funding to \$693,000. Furthermore, 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 budget provided \$14 million in funding to continue statewide library capital projects for the eighth consecutive year.

In addition, the Committee was able to advance some very important legislation this session. A main legislative priority for the Committee was a measure that requires school districts outside of New York City to distribute informational materials about the local public library to students enrolled in the school district upon the request of the local public library. The library is responsible for providing the informational materials. Another priority for the Committee was legislation that eliminates the conservation and preservation grant program for the Big Eleven research libraries and redistributes the funding to increase the statutory amount available for each of these research libraries. The Committee also reported local legislation that created the Reed Memorial Public Library District for the town of Carmel.

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 that they need.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Committee and 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, appearing to read "Micah Z. Kellner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Micah Z. Kellner
Member of Assembly

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON LIBRARIES
AND EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY**

Micah Z. Kellner, Chair

Committee Members

Majority

Thomas J. Abinanti
Barbara M. Clark
Steven Otis
Samuel D. Roberts
Michaelle C. Solages
Kenneth Zebrowski

Minority

Philip A. Palmesano
Joseph S. Saladino

Staff

Christian Malanga, Assistant Secretary for Program and Policy
Lindsey Facteau, Legislative Analyst
Gregory Berck, Associate Counsel
Edward Brown & Kevin Cassidy, Committee Clerks
Jeannine Barcher, 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 in sustaining the infrastructure and staff resources necessary to allow all New Yorkers access to the 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 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, economic and cultural 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 Majority has made increased funding for New York's public libraries a priority. To meet their funding needs, Chapter 917 of 1990 was enacted establishing a formula which was designed to provide stable funding for both libraries and library systems based on the most current census figures. The enacted budget for 2013-14 provided \$86.927 million in state aid for libraries and library systems. This is an approximate increase of 4.82%, or \$4 million, over the 2012-13 budget allocation of \$82.927 million. These funds come at a critical time, as libraries and library systems have been cutting back on much-needed services during these difficult economic times. The final approved budget also included an increase of \$172,000 for the Conservation and Preservation Program and the Talking Book and Braille Library bringing their total funding to \$693,000. 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 approved final budget provided \$14 million in funding to continue statewide library capital projects. This is the eighth consecutive year that the Assembly Majority 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.

In addition to increased funding for Aid to Public Libraries, the Committee was able to advance some very important local legislation for the library community across New York State.

Local library legislation

A.6414-A, Katz; Chapter 299 of 2013 This law authorizes the Reed Memorial Library, currently a free association library, to re-charter as a special district public library subject to a referendum of the voters.

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 2013 designed to expand and improve libraries throughout New York State.

Distribution of Public Library Information

A.3560-A, Nolan; Chapter 247 of 2013 This law requires school districts outside of New York City to distribute informational materials about the local public library to students enrolled in the school district upon the request of the local public library. The local library is responsible for providing informational materials to the school district.

Conservation and Preservation Program

A.4664-B, Kellner; Chapter 362 of 2013 This law eliminates the conservation and preservation grant program for the Big Eleven research libraries and redistributes the funding to increase the statutory amount available for each of the Big Eleven research libraries from \$126,000 to \$158,000.

Electronic Books in Libraries

A.7615, Kellner This bill would authorize and direct the Commissioner of the State Education Department to study and develop a comprehensive plan for increasing access to, and lending of electronic books in public libraries and library systems across New York State. This bill passed the Assembly and was referred to the Senate Committee on Rules

Economic Impact of Libraries

A. 7666-A, Kellner This bill would require the Empire State Development Corporation, in consultation with the State Education Department, to conduct a study on the economic impact of public libraries and public library systems. This bill passed the Assembly and was referred to the Senate Committee on Rules.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Sale of Public Library Buildings in New York City

Assembly Standing Committee on Libraries and Education Technology

June 27, 2013
10:30 a.m.
Assembly Hearing Room 1923,
19th Floor
250 Broadway, Manhattan

The Assembly Standing Committee on Libraries and Education Technology convened a public hearing in New York City on Thursday, June 27, 2013 to seek information and testimony on the practice of public library systems in the City of New York selling buildings that contain libraries. In 2008, the New York Public Library sold the Donnell Public Library building to a private developer. The New York Public Library is also considering selling the Mid-Manhattan Library building and the Science, Industry and Business Library building. The Brooklyn Public Library is contemplating selling the Pacific Library building and the Brooklyn Heights Library building. The purpose of this hearing was to examine the practice of these public library systems selling their library buildings. Specifically, the Committee was seeking testimony on the impact those sales have had or may have on the library and the services it provides to the surrounding community. Both New York Public Library and Brooklyn Public Library stated that due to the rising maintenance costs the buildings have become expensive to maintain and “NYPL would rather use resources to buy books and deliver library services to our patrons”. The concern of the community is that the sale of the Mid-Manhattan Library building and the Science, Industry, and Business Library building will suffer the same fate that the Donnell Library did, which resulted in the shrinking of the library and a lengthy closing process that negatively affected the public and in the end only benefited the developer.

Individuals who testified at the hearing include: Dr. Anthony Marx, President and CEO of the New York Public Library; Linda E. Johnson, President and CEO of the Brooklyn Public Library; Senator Velmanette Montgomery, New York State Senate; Council Member Letitia James, New York City Council; Council Member Stephen Levin, New York City Council; Michael Henry Adams, Community Cultural Associate for Senator Bill Perkins, New York State Senate; Carolyn E. McIntyre, Co-Founder of Citizens Defending Libraries; Michael D.D. White, Co-Founder of Citizens Defending Libraries; Edmund Morris, Biographer and Pulitzer Prize Winner; Ginger Strand, Author; Teri Slater, Co-Chair of Defenders of the Historic Upper East Side; Christabel Gough, Secretary of the Society for the Architecture of the City; Jacob Morris, Director of the Harlem Historical Society; SJ Avery, Co-Chair of Forth on Fourth Avenue

Committee and Park Slope Civic Council; Annalyn Swan, Editor/Biographer, Committee to Save the New York Public Library; Susan Bernofsky, Associate Professor and Director of Literacy Translation; Monica Strauss, Committee to Save the New York Public Library; Andrea Goldwyn, Director of Public Policy at New York Landmarks Conservancy; Dr. Cynthia M. Pyle, Independent Scholar; Lucy Koteen, Citizens Defending Libraries; Martha Rowen, Citizens Defending Libraries; Peter Rooney; Lo van der Valk, President of Carnegie Hill Neighbors; Therese Urban; Stephen Pierson, Executive Director of Canteen Arts, Inc.; Justine Swartz; Paula Glatzer, Committee to Save the New York Public Library; Theodore Grunewald, Committee to Save the New York Public Library; Yuki Endo, Citizens Defending Libraries; Patti Hagan, Citizens Defending Libraries; Pearl Hochstadt, Citizens Defending Libraries; Michael Leslie, Citizens Defending Libraries; Elizabeth Felicella, Architectural Photographer/Artist; Rita Bott, Retired Librarian; Donald Christensen, Research/Writer; Diane Johnston, Retired Librarian; and, Ellen S. Frankel.

V. COMMITTEE OUTLOOK FOR 2014

In the 2014 legislative session, a top priority of the Committee will be to remain focused on increasing Aid to Public Libraries and statewide library construction aid. While the economic climate is currently unfavorable for expansion of state projects, it is essential to provide libraries and library systems with adequate resources to ensure their continued viability. Additional goals for the 2014 session will include advancing important local legislation for our library community, continuing to evaluate the lending of electronic books and advancing legislation designed to expand and improve our libraries and library systems throughout New York State.

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	0		0
To Floor; Recommitted and Died			
To Ways and Means Committee	7		7
To Codes Committee	0		0
To Rules Committee	0		0
To Judiciary Committee	0		0
Total	7		7
<u>Bills Having Committee Reference Changed</u>	0		0
Total	0		0
<u>Senate Bills Substituted or Recalled</u>			
Substituted		0	0
Recalled		0	0
Total		0	0
<u>Bills Defeated in Committee</u>	0	0	0
<u>Bills Held for Consideration with a Roll-Call Vote</u>	0	0	0
<u>Bills Never Reported, Died in Committee</u>	14	3	17
<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>	21	3	24
TOTAL NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD		2	

**APPENDIX B
CHAPTERS OF 2013**

Bill Number/Sponsor	Chapter Number	Description
A.3560-A/ Nolan	Chap. 247	Requires school districts outside of New York City to distribute informational materials about the local public library to students enrolled in the school district upon the request of the local public library.
A.4664-B/ Kellner	Chap. 362	Eliminates the conservation and preservation grant program for the Big Eleven research libraries and redistributes the funding to increase the statutory amount available for these research libraries.
A.6414-A/ Katz	Chap. 299	Changes the Reed Memorial Library from a free association library to a special district library.