



## NJLA Public Policy Committee

### 2020-21 Legislative Priorities

#### State Legislation

- **Per Capita State Aid**

- Makes \$7 million supplemental appropriation to restore the Per Capita State Aid program to statutory funding level of \$10,492,00

- **Library Network Aid [A3173/S3995](#)**

- \$4 million. Support shared services provided through the Network including the statewide delivery of interlibrary loan materials and to upgrade the JerseyConnect statewide technology infrastructure.

- **State Library Information Center's Materials and Electronic Resources**

- \$1 million. Enhance the holdings and expand access to electronic resources in the State Library Information Center, to better serve state employees and the residents of New Jersey.

- **Disposal of Materials Legislations [A1180/S2644](#)**

- Allows public libraries to dispose of certain materials without advertising for bids.

Assembly sponsors: [Zwicker, Andrew](#) as Primary Sponsor

Senate Sponsors: [Bateman, Christopher](#) as Primary Sponsor  
[Beach, James](#) as Primary Sponsor

6/30/2020 Introduced in the Senate, Referred to Senate State Government, Wagering, Tourism & Historic Preservation Committee

10/19/2020 Reported from Senate Committee, 2nd Reading

1/11/2021 Passed by the Senate (34-0)

1/12/2021 Received in the Assembly, Referred to Assembly State and Local Government Committee

## State Legislation we are following

- Broadband - [various bills](#)

## Federal Legislation

- **Digital Equity for all residents (CARES Funding)**
  - \$21 million. Grant program administered by the NJ State Library to support the development of a digitally inclusive state. Options for use of the funds include:
    - The creation of community Wi-Fi hubs
    - Investment in broadband connectivity
    - The purchase and lending of Wi-Fi hotspots and devices
    - Training in the use of technologies
- **Library Stabilization Fund Act (S.4181 / H.R.7486)**
  - The spread of COVID-19 has caused significant financial losses for America's libraries, resulting in disruption to core library services, thousands of furloughs and layoffs. The Library Stabilization Fund Act would allow libraries across the country to retain staff, maintain services, and safely keep communities connected and informed. Introduced by Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) and Representative Andy Levin (D-MI), respectively, on July 2, 2020, the bicameral legislation calls for \$2 billion in emergency recovery funding for America's libraries through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).
- **Broadband - [various bills](#)**

## Public Policy Explorations

### **NJLA Public Policy Task Force:**

Background: At the September 2020 NJLA Public Policy Meeting the committee began a discussion about the role of libraries during the economic recovery focusing on the challenges in our communities after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Economic Recovery Task Force was created at this meeting to provide a strategy to leverage New Jersey libraries' community roles to better help New Jersey communities. After a literature review, the task force created the following statement.

***New Jersey should make a significant investment in public libraries as the connective tissue that fosters equality in economic recovery through expertise, resources, and opportunity at the community level for the community members – with particular emphasis for the support of women in the workplace – to help create a tomorrow that benefits all.***

A survey was sent out to all New Jersey Public Library Directors to learn what services/resources are currently being offered that support economic recovery and to better understand what each library

feels about the support they could be or already provide via a brief analysis of the successes and shortcomings of these efforts. The next steps in this process will be to evaluate the responses to determine if further analysis is needed and then building a framework for funding this initiative.

**Ongoing Construction Funding:**

The Public Policy Committee is gathering information from other states who have had success in organizing programs that provide ongoing funding for library construction. NJLA Public Policy intern Kelly Heyesey is reaching out to the 14 state libraries that offer construction programs.