



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Local public libraries awarded construction grants

THOMAS F. O'MARA June 25, 2014



Elmira, N.Y., June 25—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C-Big Flats), Assemblyman Phil Palmesano (R,C,I-Corning) and Assemblyman Chris Friend (R-Big Flats) recently announced that public libraries throughout their legislative districts have been awarded state library construction grants. The area legislators said that the grants are being awarded through New York's Library Construction Grant Program.

"A public library is a fundamental resource for area families, seniors and countless other community residents. We're hopeful that these grants will help local libraries better afford and address their renovation needs," the legislators said in a joint statement.

According to the New York State Library, which administers the grants, a recent survey revealed that public library construction and renovation needs statewide total more than

\$2.2 billion. Nearly 50% of the over 1,000 public library buildings across New York are over 60 years old. Another 30% are more than three decades old. Many of the state's local public libraries are unable to accommodate users with disabilities, cannot provide Internet and computer and other electronic technologies to users because of outdated and inadequate electrical wiring, do not have sufficient space to house the library's collection, and lack sufficient space for public access computers.

The construction grants help libraries and library systems make renovations and upgrades, update electrical wiring to accommodate computer technology, renovate facilities to provide wheelchair accessible entrances and become fully accessible to persons with disabilities, and provide community meeting rooms.

O'Mara, Friend and Palmesano announced the following grants to area libraries:

- > Steele Memorial Library (Chemung County), \$59,482 to replace the elevator;
- > Dutton S. Peterson Memorial Library (Schuyler), \$8,073 for roof upgrades;
- > Montour Falls Memorial Library (Schuyler), \$5,250 for the installation of two furnaces;
- > Avoca Free Library (Steuben), \$3,887 for overall building safety renovations and improvements;
- > Cohocton Public Library (Steuben), \$6,000 for energy efficiency upgrades;
- > Savona Free Library (Steuben), \$4,762 for the installation of a new staircase to enhance safety and accessibility, and additional disabled parking accommodations;
- > Southeast Steuben County Library in Corning (Steuben County), \$74,919 for broadband connectivity and window replacements;
- > Southern Tier Library System (Steuben), \$16,000 for meeting room accessibility, energy efficiency and broadband improvements;
- > Wimodaughasian Free Library (Steuben), \$7,244 for a new handicap accessible front door; and
- > Penn Yan Public Library (Yates), \$166,394 for exterior improvements including parking lot upgrades, outdoor lighting and handicap accessibility.