



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

## Senator Murphy Announces \$109,178 In Grants For Local Library Renovations

TERRENCE MURPHY August 7, 2018

| ISSUE: **LIBRARY FUNDING, PUBLIC LIBRARIES, ACCESS TO EDUCATION, HUDSON VALLEY**



Albany, NY - Libraries are places to explore, discover and engage. But many of New York State's public libraries are in urgent need of renovation and upgrading. More than 51% of the over 1,000 public library buildings in communities across the state are over 60 years old. Another 33% are more than three decades old. A wish list for local libraries typically includes remodeling buildings to accommodate users with disabilities, making facilities more energy inefficient, and updating Internet capabilities.

To help upgrade their services, Senator Terrence Murphy is pleased to announce that two libraries in Westchester and Putnam Counties have been awarded \$109,178 in funds from the State Aid for Library Construction Program.

The John C. Hart Library in Yorktown will receive \$83,725. The library plans to renovate three public restrooms, bringing them in compliance with ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) regulations while making them more energy efficient. The Reed Memorial Library in Carmel will get \$25,453.00 for new windows and an HVAC system.

"Libraries matter. They focus on a wide variety of populations, including children, seniors, students, and veterans," said Senator Murphy. "It is important our libraries continue to receive the funding they need to upgrade their facilities and keep pace with the public's demands."

Patricia Hallinan, Library Director for the John C. Hart Library stated, "The bathroom renovation project is a huge step toward our sustainability goals and will help us provide better service to residents in the Yorktown Heights area. There are three public bathrooms at the library, a small bathroom built in 1970, which serves our children's room, and two larger public restrooms added in 1990, which serve our adult area and community room. The library is easily accessible to senior housing. Many patrons who take advantage of our free lectures and cultural events are elderly, using canes, walkers, and wheelchairs to get around. The most important feature of this renovation is to make the public bathrooms in the Library completely handicapped accessible."

"We are so grateful for construction grant funds to restore the library's heritage windows

and upgrade an aging air conditioning system," said Jeanne Buck, Library Director for the Reed Memorial Library. "We always strive to balance caring for a building on the National Register for its architectural significance and supporting an active community with modern day demands. This funding helps to make that possible."

The New York State Education Department and New York State Library have approved 230 construction projects for public libraries and public library systems in legislative districts throughout New York State. The funds are from \$24 million in capital funds for public library construction, renovation and broadband infrastructure projects provided in the 2017-2018 State Budget. As part of the 2018-2019 State Budget, the Legislature plans to provide \$34 million for projects that will be announced in the summer of 2019.

Project activities and expenditures eligible for funds from the State Aid for Library Construction Program include financing construction of new library buildings, construction of additions to existing buildings, and the renovation and/or rehabilitation of existing space, including roof replacement, purchase and installation of photovoltaic solar panels and geothermal wells, new HVAC systems, windows, doors, and lighting systems, electrical upgrades, installation and infrastructure of broadband services, and construction of new or replacement of old walkways and parking lots, among other items.

The John C. Hart Memorial Library received its charter from New York State on Sept. 3, 1920. It serves the public as not only a place to find good material to read but also a community-gathering place for programs of interest to children and adults alike. In recent years, the library has added computer technology and training to its long list of upgrades in services.

The Reed Memorial Library was built in 1913 in memory of William Belden Reed by his wife,

Arietta Crane Reed, on land donated by Literary Union supporters, the first organization in Putnam County to establish a public library. The building retains its original decorative features and early twentieth-century institutional furnishings, which show the pronounced influence of the then-popular Arts and Crafts Movement. The library was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 for its architectural significance. Today, the Reed Memorial Library continues the work of the early Literary Union by bringing cultural, educational and recreational opportunities to the Carmel community.