

# STATE OF NEW YORK

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3706

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

January 30, 2021

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Introduced by Sen. COMRIE -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to conducting a study on the access of state public libraries and library systems to capital funding

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 273-a of the education law is amended by adding a  
2 new subdivision 9 to read as follows:

3 9. There shall be a study conducted relating to the access of state  
4 public libraries and library systems to capital funding.

5 a. The department, in consultation with the dormitory authority, the  
6 office of the state comptroller, and the public library systems of the  
7 state, shall assess and report on the capital needs of such public  
8 library systems, including public libraries and association libraries.  
9 Such study shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

10 (1) identification of current options available to libraries and  
11 library systems for financing capital projects;

12 (2) the projected capital needs of libraries and library systems over  
13 a five year period;

14 (3) identification of alternative options for libraries and library  
15 systems to finance capital projects;

16 (4) information related to dormitory authority financing of public  
17 libraries and public library systems in the past ten years including but  
18 not limited to: the total number of public libraries and library systems  
19 that have applied for dormitory authority financing; what percentage of  
20 public libraries and library systems are denied funding from the dormi-  
21 tory authority and the reasons for such denials; the total cost of the  
22 proposed projects; and the amount of financing provided for the projects  
23 and the number of project applications submitted each year;

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 (5) identification of special needs, barriers to accessing financing  
2 and options for financing for public libraries serving communities with  
3 populations of less than seventy-five hundred; and

4 (6) recommendations for the improvement of access to capital funding  
5 for public libraries and library systems.

6 b. For the purposes of this subdivision, the following terms shall be  
7 defined as follows:

8 (1) "public library" shall mean any public or association library,  
9 other than a professional, technical or public school library, estab-  
10 lished for free public purposes by official action of a municipality or  
11 district or the legislature, where the whole interests belong to the  
12 public; the term "association library" shall be construed to mean a  
13 library established and controlled, in whole or in part, by a group of  
14 private individuals operating as an association, closed corporation or  
15 as trustees under the provisions of a will or deed of trust; and the  
16 term "free" as applied to a library shall be construed to mean a library  
17 maintained for the benefit and free use on equal terms of all the people  
18 of the community in which the library is located.

19 (2) "public library system" shall mean:

20 (i) A library established by one or more counties.

21 (ii) A group of libraries serving an area including one or more coun-  
22 ties in whole or in part.

23 (iii) A library of a city containing one or more counties.

24 (iv) A cooperative library system established pursuant to section two  
25 hundred fifty-five of this part, the plan of library service of any of  
26 which shall have been approved by the commissioner.

27 c. The study required by this subdivision shall be completed by Janu-  
28 ary first, two thousand twenty-three. The findings of such study shall  
29 be provided to the governor, the speaker of the assembly, the temporary  
30 president of the senate, the chair of the assembly libraries and educa-  
31 tion technology committee, and the chair of the senate select committee  
32 on libraries. The findings of such study shall also be posted on the  
33 New York state library's website.

34 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately, provided, however that  
35 the amendments to section 273-a of the education law made by section one  
36 of this act shall not affect the expiration of such section and shall be  
37 deemed repealed therewith.