

For Immediate Contact:
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New Yorkers Overwhelmingly Vote to Support Libraries

New Yorkers overwhelmingly voted to support their local libraries during the 2009 spring elections, according to the New York Library Association (NYLA). NYLA recently surveyed libraries and library systems across the state to collect library election results. Of the 173 respondents, 97% reported that their library budget passed and only 3% reported that theirs failed.

“...,” said Michael J. Borges, NYLA Director.

Despite the bad economy, most New York localities approved funding increases for their libraries. On average, 71% of voters elected to support proposed library funding, while 29% voted against them. Ninety five libraries reported funding increases; twelve reported no change, and only three reported losing funding after the elections. The other sixty-three libraries and library districts surveyed did not provide budget numbers.

“Clearly New Yorkers understand the benefits their communities reap from libraries,” said...
“Libraries are independent learning centers, community meeting places, and entertainment hubs. They are all of these things and more, and yet they provide these services at a value you can’t get elsewhere. The spring elections demonstrate that voters clearly understand the value of libraries.”

Just in case voters would like a better illustration of their library’s value, NYLA created an online “Library Value Calculator”. The calculator provides libraries and library patrons with the total fees they would have to pay for their library’s services if libraries did not exist. To use the “Library Value Calculator” go to <http://www.nyla.org/index.php?section=valuecalc>.

About NYLA: The New York Library Association -- America’s first state library association -- was founded in 1890 to lead in the development, promotion and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship to enhance learning, quality of life, and equal opportunity for all New Yorkers.