

I am writing to urge you to support the passage of legislation (S.4101 Farley/A.113 Paulin) that would modify the existing library construction grant program.

The bill would make modifications to the public library construction grant program to allow the funds to be used to purchase vacant land upon which to build a new library or expand an existing facility.

In addition, the bill would lower the required local match from 50% to 25% of the cost of the project in high need areas of the state. Many of the libraries located in your district would benefit from this change and would be able to qualify for the 25% match. Last year \$124,000 of the \$408,000 available to libraries in the North Country Library System went unused due the high 50% match requirement. Libraries typically have to use fundraising efforts to meet the 50% match. While libraries have always been willing to use fundraising events, having to raise 50% of a construction project is an incredible task for a small public library.

This legislation has no fiscal impact on the State budget. It does not change the amount of the State-wide grant; it just changes the grant match for libraries in economically disadvantaged areas.

Please request that this bill be reported out of committee to the floor for a vote.