

A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY ECLEG MAR03'20 AM 9:47
LEGISLATORS MEYERS AND CHIMERA

**Re: Opposition to the Governor's 2020-2021 State Budget Proposal Cutting
Public Library Funding**

WHEREAS, the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library (BECPL) system adopted their 2020 budget on December 19, 2018 after this Honorable Body approved a 2.6% increase in their operating budget and Erie County has also committed \$500,000 in the 2020 capital budget to support structural improvements to the downtown Central Library location; and

WHEREAS, for multiple years in a row, the proposed executive budget cuts State library aid and library capital and construction aid; and

WHEREAS, under the Governor's proposed 2020-2021 State Budget, New York State library construction aid would be drastically reduced, including a \$20 million cut to Library Construction Aid and \$5 million cut to Library State Aid, which would leave critical construction projects to library branches unfunded; and

WHEREAS, if the proposed state budget is not amended, the reduction in state aid to the BECPL would be about \$152,000; and

WHEREAS, the BECPL has experienced a dramatic increase in demand for new programs (up 30%) and Internet usage (up 117%) since 2007, indicating that the value of public libraries is evolving but still remaining a key component of thriving, informed communities; and

WHEREAS, access to public libraries helps combat the epidemic of illiteracy in our country and also helps members of our community to assimilate into society; and

WHEREAS, the BECPL, like other local library systems across the state, is playing a critical role, working with counties and the State government, to support the 2020 Census count and outreach and engagement to maximize the number of local residents to participate in the 2020 Census and in so doing, to help our area receive the maximum amount of federal financial resources possible; and

WHEREAS, Erie County taxpayers pay a small library tax every year and deserve a return on that investment with continued State support for the programs and materials they desire and have invested in.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature hereby expresses its opposition to the Governor's proposed 2020-2021 Budget that cuts library aid to localities, and requests the New York State Legislature to, as in prior years, amend the Governor's budget proposal to maintain Library State Aid and Library Construction Aid at the 2019 levels; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Honorable Body joins with other local elected officials in opposing such cuts and commends the important work of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library System in serving our community; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the local delegation to the New York State Legislature, and the Director and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library.

Fiscal Impact: None for the resolution.