



ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

HON. KEVIN R. HARDWICK
LEGISLATOR

April 2, 2012

CE

Honorable Lynn Marinelli
Erie County Legislator – 3rd District
Old County Hall
92 Franklin Street
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Lynn:

I have held three meetings in the last couple months with the Library Boards of Grand Island and the Tonawandas. The purpose of the meetings was to address their concerns regarding the proposed county library district and discuss alternative means of improving library service in the county.

The effects of the Red/Green Budget battle are still being felt by the libraries. As a result, one of their biggest concerns is providing for a stable source of funding. I suggested we might consider changing the charter to provide a “shock absorber” for the libraries, limiting future cuts to a certain annual percentage. I suggested 2.5%, but am by no means married to it.

This idea went over well with the three local boards. I am asking Scott Kroll, the Minority Caucus’ Legislative Director, to work up a preliminary draft of such a charter change. I am attaching his work product in the hope that we can discuss it at length in an upcoming meeting of the Enrichment Committee.

I think the committee is the logical vehicle for holding discussions with all affected parties. After listening to everyone’s concerns we would then be in a position to mark up the legislation if we choose to pursue this path. Regardless, the time is right to have a discussion regarding the library’s future.

I look forward to discussing this matter with you and our colleagues on the Enrichment Committee. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kevin R. Hardwick

Erie County Legislator – 4th District

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COUNTY OF ERIE

LOCAL LAW INTRO. NO. 2-2012

LOCAL LAW NO. ___-2012

A Local Law to Provide Predictable Funding for the Buffalo & Erie County Library

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the County of Erie as follows:

SECTION 1. LEGISLATIVE INTENT.

Due to difficult funding decisions made by New York State and local governments, the Buffalo & Erie County public library has faced unpredictable funding. Just as in private enterprise, government and home finances, it is easier and more efficient for libraries to operate and provide services when funding is predictable.

Therefore, the purpose of this law is to prohibit any cuts to library funding for operational costs in excess of two and one-half percent in any given year.

Because limiting the amount of a budget cut would be a limitation on the powers of the legislature, and because citizens should have a voice as to how their tax dollars are spent on providing library services, a revision of the Erie County Charter is appropriate.

SECTION 2. Erie County Local Law number one of nineteen hundred and fifty-nine, as amended, constituting the Erie County Charter, is hereby amended to read as follows:

Article 24 of the Erie County Charter is hereby amended to read as follows:

Section 2404

c. The amount to be raised for the Buffalo and Erie County public library under this section shall not be less than 97.5% of the amount raised in the previous year's adopted budget.

SECTION 3. APPLICABILITY.

This law shall apply to all actions occurring on or after the effective date of this law.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This local law shall take effect on January 1, 2013.

SECTION 5. SEVERABILITY.

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part of this Local Law or the application thereof, to any person, individual, corporation, firm, partnership, entity or circumstance, shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unconstitutional such order of judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or part of this Local Law or in its application to the person, individual, corporation, firm, partnership, entity, or circumstance directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment or order shall be rendered.

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LEGISLATOR KEVIN R. HARDWICK