

Vote Yes on A222/S2171

January 24, 2017

Senator Nicholas P. Scutari
1514 East Saint Georges Avenue
2nd Floor
Linden, NJ 07036

Assemblyman Jerry Green
200 West 2nd Street
Suite 102
Plainfield, NJ 07060

Assemblyman James J. Kennedy
34 East Cherry Street
Rahway, NJ 07065

Dear

As a Fanwood resident, I'm writing to ask you to support the New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act (A222/S2171). This act authorizes issuance of \$125,000,000 in general obligation bonds to finance capital projects at public libraries. The bill has bipartisan support in both the state Assembly and the state Senate. I feel our library is in an excellent position to accept these funds because of the extensive plans completed by the board of trustees over the last 5 years and the overwhelming support of the residents and council.

Here's a list of the problems in our 65-year-old building that sees more visitors (nearly 43,000) than any other public building. And the problems are growing! In the last 15 years, our population has grown nearly 7%, over a third of them children.

- The building is not ADA compliant. Parents with strollers, grandparents with walkers, and anyone with impaired movement cannot visit the Children's Department.
- The **technology wiring** is hopelessly inadequate for today's users.
- The **space** fails to offer recharging or collaborative areas for teens and entrepreneurs; it has no quiet space for tutors; and it offers only a portion of the space needed for our popular programs, forcing seniors to stand.
- The **roof leaks, the siding contains holes**, and the **HVAC system** works so poorly that some visitors wear coats and others summer attire.

In 2012 the library trustees developed a strategic plan, identifying the problems and defining solutions. The following year they conducted a survey that confirmed and extended many of our concerns. They hired an architect to draw up plans to expand and reconfigure the spaces. And just last fall, council voted to approve the expansion and repairs.

We are frustrated that nothing has been done. Although a merged library was rejected by Scotch Plains and Fanwood in 2010, the latest building project was met with great enthusiasm this fall when over 750 Fanwoodians signed a petition requesting support.

Passage of this bond act would enable us to update our facility and expand it, with an infrastructure that supports the services our library needs to offer our growing community. We are primed to begin our building project now but need the assistance only a statewide bond can provide. New Jersey's economy will also benefit from this public works program designed to improve and expand our public library.

We need your support! Please vote yes for the New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act. It is critical not only to the library but to our community. We look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,