



Municipal Library Tax Levy Law Signed

We are pleased to announce Governor Christie signed the Municipal Library Tax Levy Law yesterday (S2068/A2679). The passage of this legislation was extremely important to NJLA because it treats communities which support municipal and joint libraries the same as those which support county libraries.

The primary sponsors of this legislation were Senator Nia Gill and Assemblymen Upendra Chivukula, Ruben Ramos and Assemblywoman Valerie Vainieri Huttle. Additional sponsors were: Senator Sandra Cunningham on the Senate side and on the Assembly side Assemblyman John McKeon, Jason O'Donnell, Thomas Giblyn and Assemblywomen Amy Handlin and Mila Jasey. Former Assemblyman Frederick Scalera was also a sponsor.

We are very thankful for the efforts of all these legislators in getting this bill passed.

This bill requires municipalities in which a free public library is located, or that belong to a joint municipal library, to provide for a dedicated library purposes tax on the property tax bill. The bill removes the appropriations for municipal libraries and joint municipal libraries from a municipality's general fund. Under this legislation local municipal caps will be recalculated so that they do not include the 1/3 mil dedicated library funding. Any funding above 1/3 mil would have to be included in the municipality's cap.

The legislation provides fiscal parity for communities which support municipal and joint libraries with those that support a county library system. Each was established by referendum. Under previous law, only property taxpayers in a municipality which belonged to a county library received property tax bills which include a line item showing the amount the taxpayer is paying to support the county library. This will now also be done for communities which support municipal and joint libraries. The legislation provides fiscal transparency for library funding.

Please assure your residents that this is not a new tax. It does not result in any increased taxes, but changes the way the minimum library appropriation is displayed to the public on the tax bill.

Library funding is a very small part of any tax bill. This legislation gives the public the ability to see exactly what they are paying for library services. I am sure most will agree it is a bargain.