

**TESTIMONY BY PATRICIA A. TUMULTY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE  
NEW JERSEY LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
IN SUPPORT OF S881  
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMUNITY AND URBAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
OCTOBER 2, 2008**

On behalf of the 3400 hundred members of the New Jersey Library Association and the New Jersey Library Trustee Association, I offer our complete support for S881 which would remove municipal and joint libraries from the levy cap law. We sincerely thank Senator Gill for sponsoring this critical legislation.

We strongly believe this legislation corrects a serious deficiency with the municipal levy cap law. Expenditures for funding municipal libraries had been exempt from the municipal expenditure cap for over twenty-five years. However, the current levy cap law did not include this exemption. This is proving to be a hardship for many municipalities.

Municipal and joint libraries are established by a referendum of the people. Once the referendum is passed, the municipality is required to fund library service at a minimum level. There are only 245 municipalities which are directly impacted by the municipal library law legislation. If a municipality is served by a county library, property owners

pay a dedicated library tax which is a separate dedicated tax line on the property tax bill and, therefore, not included in the new municipal tax levy legislation. Failure to exclude library funding from the levy cap has created an uneven playing field for those municipalities which are supporting municipal libraries.

Other community initiatives which were created by referendum such as open space legislation are already exempt for the cap levy. This creates a similar exemption.

This legislation remedies a very difficult issue for many communities. We strongly urge your support for this legislation.