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**Dear President Trump, Governor Cuomo, Senator Gillibrand, Senator Schumer, Congressman Reed, Senator Funke and Assemblyman Kolb:**

I am writing to ask you to support libraries. I am a library patron and am signing this letter to acknowledge the infinite possibilities libraries provide to community members.

For example, libraries provide early literacy programs that expose our youngest members of the community to language. When children are exposed to language through story, they enter school prepared to learn because they have the vocabulary and contextual knowledge necessary for success. Research has proven those who do not have these experiences enter with a million word deficit that can set them back as much as two grade levels by the time they reach fourth grade.

Libraries provide access to invaluable programming. Some of these programs ignite curiosity in our youth and lead them to pursue science or technology related career paths so important to the advancement of our nation. Others empower adults to learn and improve technology skills needed to stay secure in their career. For those with entrepreneurial spirits, libraries offer books, databases and entrepreneurial classes to develop small businesses that enrich the community and local economy.

People of all ages use the library space and programs to make connections with other people. Although technology has made the world a much smaller place, it has also led to isolation for many.

Libraries are a place where young people can meet other youngsters to play games together and have face-to-face interactions. Being sequestered in a bedroom for hours in front of a computer screen for three or more hours after school is unhealthy. Engaging in games while with others leads to a sense of belonging and connection, and in the big picture, improves a teen's sense of well-being.

For young parents looking for adult interaction injected into a long day of taking care of highly dependent infants, toddlers and preschoolers, the library is a welcome sanctuary for both introducing children to socialization with others and to find opportunities for adult conversations while children are learning to play together.

The library also offers programs to adults and seniors who may not have opportunities for in-person, recreational social interaction. For widowed seniors with family sprinkled far and wide across the country, the library is the one place they can go on a fixed budget to make connections and participate

in mentally stimulating conversations and activities with others. Research shows that socialization in later years improves mental capacity and elevates mood to lead to an improved quality of life.

There are innumerable ways that a library enriches the community and leads to a stronger, healthier and more empowered citizenry. On average, each dollar a library receives is stretched seven times to provide the space, resources and programming. Yet, even with keen ingenuity, innovation and planning, these budget dollars do have a limit to how far they may be stretched.

I ask that you support libraries with sustainable, secure and equitable funding to support the infinite possibilities for mental, intellectual and financial well-being the library offers me and my community. It is more than a resource, it is essential to preserving a high-level quality of life for everyone.

Yours,

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