

Association of College & Research Libraries
50 E. Huron St. Chicago, IL 60611
800-545-2433, ext. 2523
acrl@ala.org, <http://www.acrl.org>



June 25, 2010

Chairman Edolphus Towns
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Via fax: (202) 225-4784

Dear Chairman Towns,

On behalf of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and the over 12,000 members we represent, we are writing to encourage you to hold a hearing before the full Committee On Oversight and Government Reform on H.R. 5037 Federal Research Public Access Act (FRPAA). We have long supported this legislation, which would ensure all U.S. taxpayers have free and timely access to articles reporting the results of government-funded research projects.

ACRL, a division of the American Library Association (ALA), is the only individual membership organization in North America that develops programs, products, and services to meet the unique needs of academic and research librarians. ACRL endorsed both the House and Senate versions of FRPAA, when they were introduced, as landmark events in the ongoing effort to establish public access to federally funded research. This legislation is an important step toward reforming a system of scholarly communication to be more responsive to the needs of the academy, reflecting the nature of scholarship and research as a public good.

This bill will significantly expand access to critical research information and help to accelerate the pace of discovery and innovation. During tight budgetary times, this legislation will also help ensure all government departments and agencies that invest significant sums in extramural research will achieve a greater return on their investment.

This legislation advances the progress made by the NIH Public Access Policy, the first U.S. agency to require public access to taxpayer-funded research. Since its implementation, the NIH policy has ensured that ~4,500 new biomedical manuscripts are deposited each month, resulting in millions of Americans having access to vital health care information. Demand for this information is extremely high, with 450,000 unique users accessing material from this repository each weekday.

We believe a hearing is an important step toward giving this bill full consideration. The bill balances the needs of all stakeholders in the research community and helps to create a level playing field where all interested citizens can access the results of publicly funded research

equally. We are enthusiastic about an open hearing as it would allow an opportunity for all stakeholders to express their views.

For all these reasons, we encourage the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform to conduct hearings on H.R. 5037. Thank you in advance for considering this request.

Sincerely,



Mary Ellen K. Davis
ACRL Executive Director
mdavis@ala.org



Lori A. Goetsch,
ACRL President
Dean of Libraries at Kansas State University
lgoetsch@ksu.edu

cc: Krista Boyd, Counsel, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
(krista.boyd@mail.house.gov)
Lars Hyde, Legislative Director, The Honorable Representative Edolphus Towns
(lars.hyde@mail.house.gov)