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ALA American Library Association

July 10, 2017

The Honorable Ken Calvert, Chair
The Honorable Betty McCollum, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
United States Capitol, Room H-305
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Preserving the U.S. Geological Survey Library and Access to its Resources

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum:

It is my understanding that the Subcommittee is preparing to meet and vote soon to allocate FY2018 resources for the Department of the Interior. I write today on behalf of 58,000 members of the American Library Association (ALA) to urge you and all members of the Subcommittee to assure the continued operation of, and the public's undiminished access to, the valuable information and services provided by the libraries and librarians of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).

ALA respectfully but strongly objects to the USGS's proposal in its FY 2018 Congressional budget justification to close at least three, and potentially all four, of its library's locations and to place its trove of information in a "dark archive." Thus locked away, it would be preserved but would become largely or wholly unavailable to the many businesses, researchers, students and individuals who depend upon and use it regularly with the aid of USGS' expert librarians. In addition to pure research, those uses further a broad range of vital national priorities, from finding solutions to America's water challenges to educating the next generation of engineers and scientists and so assuring our continued global competitiveness.

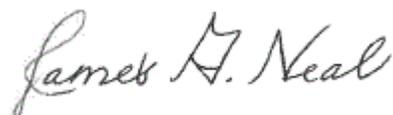
Consequently, ALA fully concurs with the nearly two dozen other trade and non-profit groups – including the National Mining Association and the Reinsurance Association of America – which recently wrote the Subcommittee to affirm that "the USGS Library is vital to the economic prosperity and well-being of the country." (See bit.ly/USGSLibraryLetter.) ALA asks, therefore, that the Subcommittee provide continued funding for the USGS Library and expressly direct that such funds be used to maintain robust access to its collections and expert information services.

The Hon. Ken Calvert
The Hon. Betty McCollum

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Thank you for this opportunity to provide the Subcommittee with the American Library Association's views on this important matter. Please contact Gavin Baker of ALA's Office of Government Relations in Washington at gbaker@alawash.org should you or your staff have any questions, or if we can provide additional information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James G. Neal". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

James G. Neal, President

cc: Members of the Subcommittee