November 3, 2020

Board of Supervisors
Loudoun County
1 Harrison Street, SE, 5th Floor
Leesburg, VA 20175

Dear Chair Randall and Supervisors:

We are writing to express our full support for the board of trustees (LBOT) of Loudoun County Public Library (LCPL), and to ask that you maintain their status as a governing entity.

The governance structure for LCPL has served the library and its diverse stakeholders exceedingly well, as evidenced by the awards and accolades conferred by numerous local, state and national organizations, including the American Library Association (ALA) which, in 2019, presented LCPL with the Excellence in Library Programming Award. LCPL has also proven itself to be a valued partner to Loudoun County officials and agencies and was recognized by the National Association of Counties for recent collaborations with Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Developmental Services and the Clerk of the Circuit Court.

At its annual conference in 2019, ALA and United for Libraries were honored to host LCPL Director Liu, former LBOT Chair Miller, County Administrator Hemstreet, and County Supervisor Saines in a panel discussion about LCPL’s budgeting process. All participants described strong communication and a constructive working relationship built on trust between the library and the county. Supervisor Saines credited LCPL’s staff and board with visionary and forward-thinking leadership.

The governing LBOT hires and evaluates the library director and oversees development and implementation of the library’s strategic plan. They ensure compliance with Standards for Virginia Public Libraries and commit to advancing a community-centered agenda that expands access, guarantees privacy and confidentiality, protects intellectual freedom, and adapts to reflect the needs of the community. They are conduits for community engagement, accountable to the districts they represent, and dedicated stewards of the library’s budget. In all respects, LCPL’s governing LBOT demonstrates how a governing board should operate.

We believe that LCPL staff can fully avail themselves of Virginia’s recently granted right to collective bargaining under the current governance structure, as is already the case in libraries across the country. On behalf of ALA’s more than 2,000 members in Virginia, we urge the Loudoun County Board of
Supervisors to retain a governing board of trustees at Loudoun County Public Library, so that LCPL can continue to thrive as it anticipates and serves the needs of Loudoun County residents today and well into the future.

Sincerely,

Julius C. Jefferson, Jr., President
American Library Association

David Paige, President
United for Libraries

cc:  Tim Hemstreet, County Administrator
     Chang Liu, Director, Loudoun County Public Library
     Christina Olorunda, Interim Chair, Loudoun County Public Library
     Jennifer Resor-Whicker, President, Virginia Library Association