



## 400 participate in Legislative Day 2009 *Exciting change ahead for 2010*

Many Americans may be canceling their vacation plans this summer, but a weakened national economy certainly didn't deter over 400 participants in this year's National Library Legislative Day (NLLD) from traveling to the nation's capitol this May to speak up for libraries.

This year, the states claiming the biggest groups were Illinois with 53 participants led by Bob Doyle, Executive Director of the Illinois Library Association; North Carolina with a busload of 32 led by Carol Walters, director of libraries for Sandhill Regional Library System; and California with 23 led by Deborah Doyle, of the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library.

The annual event, sponsored by The American Library Association (ALA), Chief Officers of State Library Agencies, the District of Columbia Library Association and the Special Libraries Association, was held May 11 and 12.

In light of the budgetary constraints facing Congress this session, a top focus of NLLD was urging Senators to sign on the Appropriations "Dear Colleague" letter asking for \$300 million for the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) program and \$100 million for Improving Literacy Through School Libraries grant program in the final version of the FY 2010 budget. NLLD participants' efforts led to 41 Senators signing onto the letter.

Participants were briefed on this issue and many other legislative matters, such as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), during a day of briefings held May 11. They also learned techniques for successful advocacy in order to prepare for their meetings with members of Congress the next day.

Kristin Murphy, NLLD coordinator, said participants covered every state delegation and that face-to-face interaction with elected officials is the most efficient way to ensure they understand and respond to the needs of our nation's libraries.

“Members of Congress are constantly being asked for their attention on a variety of issues,” Murphy said. “Without effective advocacy, other groups will convince our elected officials to focus on their issues instead of our own.”

### **One-time Opportunity for 2010**

In 2010, since ALA's Annual Conference is in Washington, D.C., the Washington Office will try something new. Monday, June 28, 2010, ALA will hold a big rally on Capitol Hill with members of Congress and senators speaking to the library group. Afterward, rally-goers will meet with their representative and senators' offices to talk about issues in their libraries. States will have banners, participants can carry signs with our library messages, and we will shout our message for all to hear!

Photo Caption: (NLLD 2009)

ALA President Jim Rettig and President-elect Camila Alire (center) enjoy the NLLD reception along with Barbara Folensbee-Moore, Director of Library Services for Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP (left); and M.J. Oboroceanu, the outgoing president of the District of Columbia Library Association (right).