



Appropriations Update

January 2009 – ALA Midwinter Conference

For FY 2009, Congress failed to pass a single one of the 12 regular appropriations bills. Before leaving to campaign this fall, Congress passed a continuing resolution that expires on March 6, 2009. Congress is expected complete action on the FY 2009 bills in time for President Obama to sign them (likely as an omnibus appropriations bill) right after he takes office, so that Congress and the President can focus on FY 2010. The President will send his FY 2010 budget request to Congress on February 2.

FY 2009

In the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we asked Congress to follow the President's FY 2009 request to fund the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) at \$214.432 million and fund the Improving Literacy Through School Libraries program at \$100 million.

In the Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill, we asked the Subcommittee to fund the Government Printing Office at the President's FY 2009 request of \$174.354 million and to adequately fund the National Library Service for the Blind process of switching the talking books and associated playback equipment from four-track cassette tapes to digital (USB) flash memory cartridges. NLS estimates the cost of transition is \$76.4 million, over a four-year period, and the Library of Congress received only \$12.5 million of the \$19.1 million requested in FY 2008.

In the Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we are asked the Subcommittee to restore the proposed \$4 million cuts to the National Agriculture Library (NAL) and add an additional \$1 million to allow NAL to provide access to agricultural information and literature.

Members of Congress circulated a letter addressed to both the Senate and House Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriation Subcommittees and requests that the Senate and House include President Bush's request of \$214.432 million for LSTA and increased funding for the Improving Literacy Through School Libraries program for FY 2009.

ALA thanks the 18 House signers that include: Reps. Allen, Arcuri, Baldwin, Clay, Conyers, Ehlers, Grijalva, Hinchey, Holden, Holt, Loeb sack, Ross, Shimkus, Skelton, Van Hollen, Waxman, Wexler, and Wu.

ALA thanks the 47 Senate signers that include: Senators Akaka, Baucus, Biden, Bingaman, Boxer, Brown, Burr, Cantwell, Cardin, Casey, Clinton, Coleman Collins, Conrad, Dodd, Dole, Durbin, Feingold, Johnson, Kennedy, Kerry, Klobuchar, Kohl, Lautenberg, Leahy, Levin, Lieberman, Lincoln, McCaskill, Menendez, Mikulski, Bill Nelson, Obama, Pryor, Reed, Rockefeller, Salazar, Sanders, Schumer, Smith, Snowe, Stabenow, Sununu, Tester, Webb, Whitehouse, and Wyden.