

ALA PUBLIC POLICY AND ADVOCACY
Six-month Report to Board and Council
June 15, 2021

RECORD INCREASES IN FEDERAL FUNDING FOR LIBRARIES

ALA leads successful campaign to include billions for America's #LibrariesStrong in ARPA

The largest spending bill ever approved by Congress, the \$1.9 trillion-dollar [American Rescue Plan Act](#) (ARPA), included unprecedented levels of direct and indirect funding for libraries. PPA staff worked tirelessly for months to make these temporary funding streams become a reality.

Relief funding for IMLS:

ARPA included \$200 million for libraries through the [Institute of Museum and Library Services](#) (IMLS). Of the \$200 million for IMLS, 89 percent (\$178 million) is allocated for state library administrative agencies (using the Grants to States formula after a [\\$2 million state minimum](#) and \$200,000 minimum for territories). IMLS is currently working with state library agencies to provide guidance on allowable uses of funding available to states. The intent of Congress was for this funding to be as flexible as possible to allow each state and territory the freedom to address its individual library needs.

Relief funding for local governments:

Finally, the rescue legislation provides [billions of dollars in library-eligible funding](#), with more than \$360 billion going to state, local and tribal governments. States and local governments will decide how to spend their piece of the \$360 billion pie. To receive library-eligible funding outside of IMLS, ALA members must advocate at the state and local level. The best way to secure funding outside IMLS will be to partner with local governments, school administrators, and other community service organizations. ALA is exploring opportunities for libraries to leverage state and local ARPA resources and will provide guidance to chapters next week on how to tap into federal funds.

On March 25, a team of PPA staff met with AASL leadership to present information on ARPA and its implications for school libraries. The session was an opportunity for PPA staff and consultants to provide in-depth analysis of the legislation, highlight funding opportunities for school libraries, lead brainstorming and develop messaging for local advocacy to position school libraries to access the billions of dollars in relief funding available.

Relief funding to connect Americans:

ARPA also provided more than \$7 billion for libraries and schools to purchase and distribute technology necessary for remote learning, working from home, virtual healthcare visits and more. The bill calls for an Emergency Education Connectivity Fund through the FCC's E-rate program. Participating libraries will receive 100% reimbursement for the cost of hotspots and other Wi-Fi-capable devices such as modems, routers, laptops, and tablets. The connectivity fund is a brand new program, and ALA provided input during the rulemaking process. PPA filed [comments](#) and [reply comments](#) in response to the Public Notice issued in March 2021. In addition to submitting comments on behalf of ALA, PPA coordinated with COSLA and Urban Libraries Council (ULC) to provide a strong library voice on questions raised from the FCC on how to prioritize available funding and the Children's Internet Protection Act. PPA also worked with AILA and ATALM to ensure tribal libraries would be eligible for the ECF program. Prior to the Commission vote, PPA's Marijke

Visser, MSLIS, Senior Policy Advocate, and Arkansas State Library's Amber Gregory, Chair of ALA's E-rate Task Force, [met with](#) staff from the offices of Interim Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Starks and Simington, and the Wireline Competition Bureau to voice concerns over some of the provisions in the FCC's draft order. Concerns raised included requirements to retain personally identifiable information of library patrons, allowing more flexibility for eligible services, as well as requesting changes to language related to tribal library eligibility. In early May, the FCC released the final rules for the ECF program. PPA prepared a [summary](#) of the order and provided overviews of the funding opportunity to COSLA, ALA Chapters, and AASL members as part of the ARPA outreach to members. PPA also held a webinar for state E-rate coordinators and are planning an additional Q&A session in early June. Along with the E-rate Task Force, PPA developed an ECF web page (<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/ECF>) with outreach resources to support libraries that choose to apply for funding. On June 15, the [FCC announced that the application window](#) starts on June 29, 2021, and ends on August 13, 2021.

Another program funded through ARPA aimed at addressing the digital divide, the [Emergency Broadband Benefit Program](#), provides a discount up to \$50 per month for broadband service (or up to \$75 per month on qualifying tribal lands) and a one-time discount up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop, or tablet computer purchased through a participating provider. PPA submitted comments to the FCC to highlight how libraries provide the public with resources and outreach materials and could help connect eligible patrons to the new program. ALA's comments also requested the FCC provide support materials for libraries and other community organizations so that staff are prepared to provide the best information when the program is implemented. PPA's Marijke Visser joined a panel presentation for media outlet Broadband Breakfast, [The Emergency Broadband Benefit: What's Included, and How Will the \\$3.2 Billion Program Work](#), to talk about the outreach role of libraries.

Library staffers in all settings can help raise awareness of this new emergency funding. A customized press release, fact sheet, and newsletter blurb are available at www.ala.org/advocacy/broadband. The program is being administered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), whose outreach [toolkit](#) is a collection of social media, printables, and other multilingual content to assist outreach partners, and grassroots organizers in raising awareness about the Emergency Broadband Benefit. Aligned with the program launch, PPA staff customized and shared outreach materials via American Libraries [online](#) and AL Direct on May 12. Advocates also had the opportunity to join a national day of action on May 14 called by Next Century Cities, also hosting additional information and outreach strategies on its [website](#).

With FY 2022 appropriations behind schedule, ALA advocates press forward to #FundLibraries

The Biden Administration submitted its budget on May 28, which supports \$265 million in total for IMLS in FY 2022, including \$197 million for the IMLS-administered Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), and \$28 million for IAL in FY 2022 administered through the Department of Education. The proposed number for the full IMLS budget saw an increase of \$8 million from last year, which totaled \$257 million in FY 2021. The proposed funding for the LSTA and IAL are level with the FY 2021 final budget, both of which received increases from the previous year. The administration's budget for library programs reflects its focus on equity and inclusion, and ALA will continue to emphasize to Congress and the Administration that equity as a library priority. The \$8 million plus-up is a welcome change following four years of proposed elimination of IMLS.

The Federal budget process traditionally starts when the President submits the Administration's budget to Congress. In the first year of a new administration, this budget submission is often delayed while the administration gets its feet on the ground. The Biden Administration budget was further delayed due in part to the early focus on the COVID-19 pandemic, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), and understaffing at key budget offices. While this delay was anticipated, ALA and library advocates continued to push for additional funding.

The PPA office is leading the library funding campaign on several fronts. ALA held targeted virtual meetings during National Library Week. The annual Dear Appropriator letters, delayed by several weeks, kicked off in April. PPA [engaged library advocates](#) to contact their Members of Congress to sign the fiscal year (FY) 2022 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) letters. When the House letters closed, more than 100 Representatives signed each letter (104 for LSTA and 110 for IAL), continuing five-straight years of 100+ signatures. The Senate letters will remain open beyond Annual Conference, and we're expected to surpass the number of signatures from FY 2021. These letters support funding for school libraries, and state library agencies grants to public, academic, school, and special libraries.

PPA submits comments and partners with coalitions on additional federal library programs

In addition to PPA's work on the LSTA and IAL letters, PPA staff also worked with other organizations and coalitions to support programs that are library eligible, such as the Education Department's Title IV Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant program, Literacy Education for All, Results for the Nation (LEARN) Act grants, Coalition for Education Funding, and Public Service Loan Forgiveness Coalition.

In April, PPA submitted a letter to Education Secretary Miguel Cardona, urging the Department to utilize the resources available from academic, public and school libraries as it distributes funding from ARPA. PPA also added ALA's support to an additional letter to Secretary Cardona urging the Department to strengthen the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program.

In early May, PPA responded to a request for information by the Department of Education concerning the IAL program. PPA solicited remarks from AASL members and filed comments. PPA also assisted ACRL in the development of its legislative priorities.

In May, PPA submitted testimony to the House Appropriations Committee calling for increases to LSTA and IAL programs. Senate testimony will be filed in June. Following the successful virtual meetings with congressional offices in April, ALA PPA staff met with key Appropriations committee staff throughout the spring, making the case for increased funding for LSTA and IAL. PPA also worked with local advocates to set up additional virtual meetings with Members of Congress.

In late May, IMLS announced the availability of [\\$15 million in grants for libraries and museums](#) through funding provided in the ALA-supported ARPA. These competitive grants are available to all library types, including academic, public, school, special, state libraries, non-profits and others. ALA is working to ensure that the library community is aware of these grants ahead of the June 28 submission deadline.

PPA increases visibility and support for the Build America's Libraries Act

Outreach to members of Congress, allies and library advocates on the Build America's Libraries Act (H.R. 1581 / S. 127) has been a full court press in 2021. The \$5 billion one-time infusion of funding for public,

tribal and state libraries that serve the public would radically enhance library services—particularly in long-underresourced communities of color. PPA staff launched and regularly add content to the legislation’s [advocacy landing page](#), where advocates can easily get just-in-time information about co-sponsors and quickly contact their members to thank them or to encourage them to join as a co-sponsor. As of June 16, the bill’s cosponsors have grown to 123 bipartisan Representatives – including a majority of House Democrats – and 24 Senators. The bill also been endorsed by 30 national organizations. PLA Deputy Director and ALA Deputy Director of Policy Larra Clark and ALA Deputy Director of Policy and Government Relations Gavin Baker have held briefings with ALA and PLA board leaders, the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies, state library chapters and United for Libraries. All briefings were well-attended and participants highly engaged. Staff also are working to increase visibility in media outlets with letters to the editor and op-eds, particularly in newspapers located in the districts of key committee members. PPA is mobilizing ALA members to advocate with their legislators, share the information widely through their libraries’ networks and use the hashtag #BuildLibraries to increase awareness and engagement.

Library supporters have been spreading the word about the need for the bill, with assistance from PPA; op-eds and letters to the editor have appeared in [The Hill \(Washington, D.C.\)](#), [Glens Falls \(N.Y.\) Post-Star](#), [Portland \(Maine\) Press-Herald](#), [CalMatters](#), [Louisville \(Ky.\) Courier-Journal](#), [Macomb \(Mich.\) Daily](#), [Santa Cruz \(Calif.\) Sentinel](#), [The Colorado Sun](#), [Eugene \(Ore.\) Register-Guard](#), [The Virginian-Pilot](#), [Capital \(Md.\) Gazette](#), [New York Times](#), [VTDigger](#), [Tacoma \(Wash.\) News Tribune](#), [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#), [Springfield \(Mo.\) News-Leader](#), [Anchorage Daily News](#), [Martinsburg \(W.Va.\) Journal](#), and [Delaware State News](#).

On May 20, PPA also released a [data brief](#) estimating the national need for public library construction and renovation at \$32 billion. Congressional negotiations on an infrastructure package, which could include funding for library facilities as envisioned in the Build America’s Libraries Act, are expected to continue into the summer.

Other infrastructure activities

ALA has also supported other legislative efforts to improve infrastructure that include libraries as eligible beneficiaries, including the Safe Drinking Water at Public Playgrounds, Parks, and Libraries Act (H.R. 3423), Open Back Better Act (H.R. 1485 / S. 531), and Energy Efficient Public Buildings Act (H.R. 1993).

DEVELOPMENTS IN PUBLIC POLICY

PPA supports reintroduced broadband legislation, E-rate expansion

Support for broadband in Congress and at the FCC shows no sign of diminishing in 2021, beginning with the reintroduction of two bills that ALA supported in the last congress. Senators Manchin and Collins reintroduced the [HOTSPOTS Act](#) and were joined by Sens King, Warner, Murkowski, Cornyn, Boozman, Tester, and Crapo. Congressman Clyburn, House Majority Whip and chair of the Rural Broadband Caucus and Senator Klobuchar reintroduced the [Accessible Affordable Internet for All Act](#), comprehensive legislation that includes funding for digital inclusion programs as well as for broadband deployment. Similar bills are being introduced continually.

ALA also joined a [petition](#) with our coalition partner, the Schools Health Library Broadband Coalition, requesting the FCC open a proceeding to allow E-rate funding to be used to help connect students and

library patrons who lack home internet access. PPA filed additional [comments](#) with the FCC raising issues specific to libraries and encouraging the Commission to include all library patrons and not only students who are on the wrong side of the digital divide. ALA is also a member of the Edlinc Coalition, which also filed comments. With the passage of ARPA and the inclusion of \$7.172 billion for this purpose, we are now tuning our attention to providing input on how the FCC should implement this new program.

PPA Associate Director and Senior Policy Advocate Marijke Visser and Senior Director of Public Policy and Government Relations Dr. Alan Inouye, along with the Schools Health and Libraries Broadband Coalition (SHLB) and other education-focused groups, met with the staff at the National Economic Council leading the development of the broadband infrastructure provisions in President Biden's American Jobs Plan to discuss ALA and libraries' priorities.

The FCC's Advisory Committee on Diversity and Digital Empowerment will be finalizing its report to the Commission on the role of libraries in ensuring digital equity, and Marijke Visser was asked to review the working draft and provide updates on library activities to address the digital divide in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The final report is expected to be released in late summer.

Marijke Visser was invited to participate in a new coalition and research project led by Consumer Reports and the XLab at the University of Pennsylvania that will focus on developing broadband affordability, fairness metrics and recommendations to the FCC and other relevant federal agencies. The goal of the research is to secure accurate data to influence and reform federal broadband policy, expand affordable broadband access and increase awareness of unfair practices in the broadband market.

Marijke Visser also participated in a webinar on May 4, "[Broadband as a Human Right](#)," which is part of a series by the ALA Task Force on United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

eBook advocacy continues on multiple fronts

ALA continues eBook advocacy at the national level and supporting efforts at the state level. Both ALA representatives and librarians from around the country contributed to media stories (e.g., in the [Washington Post](#)) protesting the Amazon digital book embargo of libraries. This public pressure is helping the House Judiciary Committee to consider legislation on this issue.

In Maryland, legislation on electronic book licenses for libraries enjoyed multiple unanimous votes in favor as it progressed in the General Assembly before hitting [opposition by the Association of American Publishers](#). The new Maryland law on library eBook access took effect on June 1. It is of the form, "if a publisher sells to the public, then it must also sell to libraries at reasonable terms." ALA provided policy advice, [legal counsel](#), and communications advocacy assistance to the Maryland Library Association and continues to provide advice now in this post-passage stage. Similar legislation passed the New York legislature and now awaits the signature of Governor Cuomo. Legislation in Rhode Island was also recently introduced, and ALA is providing legal counsel and policy advice.

The Joint Digital Content Working Group released its report, with an article in the June issue of American Libraries. Additionally, the Panorama Project released its "Immersive Media and Books 2020" [study](#). ALA is a sponsor and member of the study committee for this study and is a member of the overall [advisory council](#). Dr. Alan Inouye served on library eBook panels at the Texas Library Association and Maryland and Delaware Library Association annual conferences.

In the matter of the Penguin Random House acquisition of Simon & Schuster, ALA representatives met with officials from the U.S. Department of Justice to discuss library interests and perspectives. Also, the Panorama Project released its “Immersive Media & Books 2020” study that provides data on use and perceptions of varied forms of media. This study includes helpful data of relevance to libraries. ALA is a member of the advisory council and research study committee of the Panorama Project.

PPA, PLA collaborate to build Census data literacy

PPA is partnering with the Public Library Association (PLA) to launch a new project on [Census Data Literacy](#). The project builds on more than two years of advocacy for a complete and inclusive count in the 2020 Census and will continue to engage U.S. Census Bureau staff with libraries. It will promote awareness and use of community-level Census data and build the data literacy skills of library staff, which will enhance their services and programs. The data literacy skills embedded in this project will help libraries and communities move forward in efforts to recover from the pandemic and also to reckon with the past, as legacies of racism and exclusion can be uncovered through research using the Census. The [first webinar](#) in the series of six, “Data that Counts: An Introduction to Census Data for Public Libraries” takes place April 6, 2021, at 1 p.m. CDT.

ALA files comments, begins meeting with Congressional committee staff on workforce policy

Responding to a call for input from stakeholders on policy ideas on workforce development from the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee Chair and Ranking Member, ALA provided [comments](#) and has begun follow-up outreach with key committee staff in the Senate and House. The comments and meetings build on and provide more detail about how libraries are currently engaged in workforce and career services and how they could play a more significant role in equitable economic recovery as part of the American Jobs Plan and/or reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. A new two-page [overview](#) and related resources are available on the [ALA’s workforce innovation policy page](#).

ALA participates in Copyright Office’s triennial anti-circumvention rulemaking

During the weeks of April 5 and April 12, ALA, as part of the [Library Copyright Alliance](#) (LCA), participated in the Digital Millennium Copyright Act’s [triennial rulemaking](#) to identify classes of works that are exempt from the Section 1201 anti-circumvention provision. LCA requested an exemption to circumvent DVDs and Blu-Ray discs in order for libraries to make preservation copies. Three media librarians from Hofstra University, University of California-Berkeley and Emory University testified, as well as legal counsel on behalf of ALA. In the past, ALA has been successful in getting exemptions for e-readers to enable text to speech functionality, for computer game preservation, and for circumvention of DVDs to create clips for classroom and research use.

Carrie Russell, Senior Program Director and ALA Copyright Specialist, participated in several copyright-related speaking engagements, including:

- March 4 CopyTalk webinar, “Fair Use Best Practices for Open Educational Resources,” at the American University Washington School of Law
- May 20 CopyTalk webinar, “20+years of copyright advocacy,” with legal counsel Jonathan Band
- May 7 “Copyright Issues in the days of online programming,” at the Joint Maryland and Delaware Library Associations conference
- April 22 “Copyright in the Age of Pandemics,” at the Texas Library Association conference

ADVOCACY OUTREACH

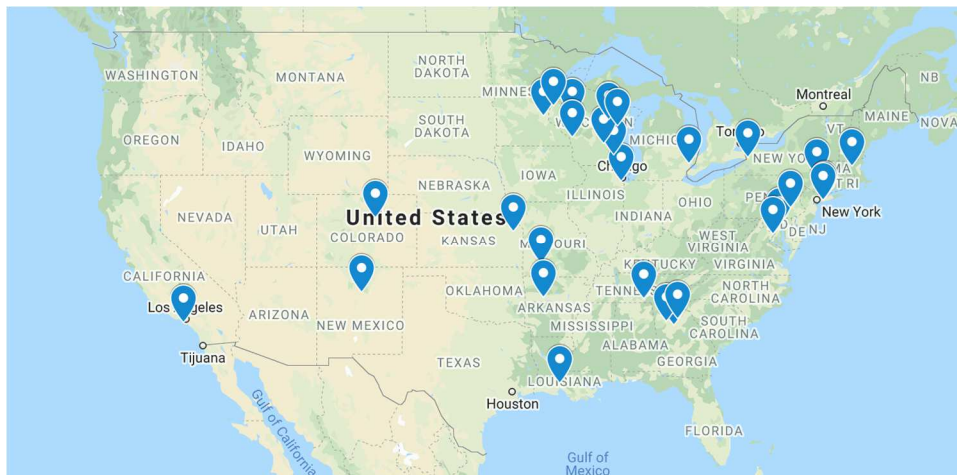
PPA leads library advocacy during 2021 National Library Week and Take Action for Libraries Day

2021's National Library Week saw significant engagement from members of Congress on social media, many of whom marked the week by reiterating their support for the Build America's Libraries Act. During NLW, 23 members of Congress celebrated and thanked libraries and library workers. On the annual Take Action for Libraries Day, PPA organized several social media engagements for advocates, in addition to opportunities to advocate for the Build America's Libraries Act and ALA's annual Appropriations requests. Advocates shared stories about the importance of library funding and infrastructure and urged their members of Congress to keep libraries fully funded.

PPA staff also provided an opportunity for advocates to send messages to their members of Congress through its online advocacy platform on Take Action for Libraries Day. Advocates were encouraged to contact to their legislators to be added as cosponsors for the Build America's Libraries Act, as well as gather additional signatures for the Dear Appropriator letters for the LSTA and IAL.

ALA positions libraries as national infrastructure during United for Infrastructure Week

May 10-14, 2021, marked the annual United for Infrastructure Week (UFIW), an opportunity to highlight and uplift examples of library infrastructure. As part of the broader campaign to pass the Build America's Libraries Act, PPA staff encouraged libraries across the country to share stories and pictures of their library infrastructure on social media, and to engage their members of Congress on the issue. Throughout the week, dozens of libraries posted their stories on social media and urged their members of Congress to modernize and build library facilities. During UFIW, 6 members of Congress posted on social media supporting the Build America's Libraries Act. PPA staff [developed a map](#) (see below) of libraries that shared a story on social media during UFIW, and gathered examples (see below and end of document) of some of the post highlights from the week. In addition to the social media campaign, PPA staff also sent out a targeted phone action alert to advocates who had previously sent messages to their legislators through a [infrastructure-focused advocacy alert](#) in support of the Build America's Libraries Act. Advocates phoned their legislators and left messages to further illustrate the need for Congress to recognize libraries as a critical part of the nation's infrastructure. Thanks to ALA grassroots advocacy mobilization, key legislators signed onto the bill, including Senate Appropriations Committee member Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA).





ALA hosts advocacy training and virtual meetings during National Library Week 2021

During National Library Week (April 5-9, 2021), ALA PPA staff organized targeted meetings with Members of Congress who are appropriators, along with some new Members that could be cultivated as library champions to request continued federal funding for libraries. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, it was imperative that PPA staff develop a touchpoint with Congress to remind them of how libraries have been vital in their communities, by providing broadband access, telehealth support, and additional resources for students and job seekers as education remains virtual and unemployment grows. During the week prior, PPA staff hosted a training webinar for participants to meet one another, address any outstanding questions, and prepare the advocates for their meetings with their members of Congress. ALA advocates and PPA staff met with members of Congress - both Democratic and Republican - in the House and Senate including 23 new legislators. The meetings led to a productive discussion with Members of Congress about the importance of libraries and sustained library funding. Several legislators also agreed to sign on in support of the Build America's Libraries Act.

PPA brings members of Congress, other dynamic guests during ALA Midwinter Meeting & Exhibits

With the 2020 elections bringing sweeping changes to Washington and many state capitals, PPA office hosted special guests during ALA's Midwinter Meeting. In [an exclusive interview](#) held days after the Capitol riots in January, U.S. Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) spoke with ALA President Julius C. Jefferson, Jr.,

about the effects of the pandemic on the nation, his love for libraries and prospects for libraries in the new Congress. Reed encouraged ALA members to cultivate more library champions by deepening relationships with their elected leaders at every level of government.

PPA also hosted a pair of sessions highlighting opportunities and challenges for libraries in the 117th Congress. The first session, *New Directions from State and Federal Policy Makers: Maximize your Influence*, featured a range of dynamic speakers, including a national education journalist (Lauren Camera, US News & World Report), an education and budget policy expert (Sarah Abernathy, Committee for Education Funding), a government relations and advocacy professional (Briana McNamee, New York Library Association) and ALA Senior Director of Public Policy and Government Relations Alan Inouye. Moderated by ALA Committee on Legislation Chair Joe Thompson (Carroll County Public Library), the session addressed what to expect on the education, appropriations, and budget priorities for library advocates in Washington and in the state capitals.

The centerpiece of the second session, *Navigating Advocacy in a Virtual World*, was a [recorded virtual library tour](#) of Clinton-Macomb (Mich.) Public Library, led by library director and ALA executive board member Larry Neal for U.S. Representative Andy Levin (D-MI-9). In a conversation moderated by ALA Committee on Library Advocacy Chair Justin de la Cruz, Larry Neal and Rep. Levin's Senior Legislative Assistant Courtney Laudick shared insight and tips on how library advocates can work with legislative offices even during a pandemic. During the session PPA introduced a new resource for advocates, [How to Conduct a Virtual Library Tour](#).

PPA interviews Rep. Andy Levin for American Libraries podcast

In a special bonus episode of American Libraries' podcast Call Number, PPA Assistant Director of Communications Shawnda Hines interviewed Rep. Andy Levin (D-MI-9). The 20-minute conversation took place within days of Congress passing the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, which included \$200 million in relief funding for libraries. The newest champion for libraries in Congress, in 2020 Rep. Levin worked with Sen. Jack Reed to rally Congress to include \$50 million in emergency relief funding for libraries in the CARES Act. Months later, they introduced the \$2 billion dollar Library Stabilization Fund Act. In February Rep. Levin introduced the House version of Sen. Reed's Build America's Libraries Act (see below). In his March 10 interview Rep. Levin discussed his love of libraries, commitment to standing up for them and how to best advocate for libraries at every level of government.

ALA supports new ATALM initiative, participates in Tribal Library Summit

With funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM) is launching [Sustaining and Advancing Indigenous Cultures](#), a strategic planning initiative to develop a unified approach to strengthening indigenous cultural institutions. PPA's Marijke Visser is serving on the national planning committee and co-moderated one of the focus groups during the March 9 [Tribal Library Summit](#). The goal of the Tribal Library Summit is to establish a sustainable structure that will improve library services to Native peoples. The Summit featured a keynote by Crosby Kemper, Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services; a preview of 2021 tribal library survey data; breakout sessions focusing on capacity building, funding and program; and brainstorming sessions to discuss the needs, trends and future of tribal libraries. The discussions will contribute to the development of a prioritized action plan.

Libraries Build Business (LBB) cohort continues implementation of small business and entrepreneur development programs

With most programs being offered virtually or with other modifications due to COVID-19, the LBB cohort and project staff are working toward their goals of building local capacity, identifying and capturing promising practices and disseminating project resources to the field. The cohort's bi-weekly meetings continue to offering peer learning and support, as well professional development opportunities through guest presenters and experts. In January, project consultants from the Cicero group provided insight on running focus groups in their library and PPA Assistant Director of Communications, Shawnda Hines, led a workshop on crafting and delivering an elevator speech. With ongoing guidance from Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion consultant LaKesha Kimbrough, the cohort is working to fully integrate EDI into the project goals and activities.

The LBB project team also began efforts toward scaling and expanding the peer learning network. In January, to coincide with the Midwinter Conference, the project leaders opened an LBB Community Slack discussion board to invite new participants share resources and join the discussion group. The LBB project time will continue to cultivate the Slack community throughout the year, adding new members, and building capacity in cohort members as co-managers and peer leaders.

During the Midwinter Conference, the Libraries Build Business project offered one session: [Libraries Build Business Midwinter Lunch & Learn](#). This was a pre-recorded session and was available continuously throughout the conference. Many members of the LBB cohort participated in developing and recording the session. In addition to the pre-recorded session, LBB hosted a mixer for people to come and meet the cohort. This was a great success and we were able to connect with individuals interested in the initiative and small business programming in their libraries.

As part of Phase Two of the project, LBB cohort members will offer coaching and mentoring, starting in summer 2021. In addition, the project team has begun development of the program's playbook, which will include initiative learnings and promising practices to share with the field. The goals of phase two include scaling the peer learning network and providing resources and support to the field. Data collection is in progress through the evaluation framework and tools collaboratively created by Cicero Group and the LBB cohort.

Beyond the day-to-day project implementation, the project team and the LBB cohort are working on big picture goals of scaling the community and developing promising practices and resources to share with the field. The LBB cohort continues bi-weekly meetings for peer learning and sharing and professional development. Guest speakers included continued work on equity, diversity, and inclusion with a presentation by LaKesha Kimbrough, EDI consultant, on the Cultural Humility Framework, and business legal issues with Ryan Metheny from the Los Angeles Law Library. Additionally, cohort members shared presentations focused on the highlights and challenges of their programs and read and discussed *The Entrepreneur Roller Coaster* by Darren Hardy.

In addition to the peer learning network for the cohort, LBB continues to expand and scale the LBB Community to new members interested in small business and entrepreneur programs in public libraries. Cohort members, along with the ALA project team, co-manage the community Slack discussion board, welcoming new members and answering questions. The project team has begun development of the program's playbook, which will include initiative learnings and promising practices to share with the field. In Summer 2021, the cohort will offer coaching and mentoring opportunities to interested library workers. Selected coaches will receive additional grant funding from LBB and be named a LBB Fellow.

Coaches will also receive professional development and training as they take on this new leadership role. Details about the program will be released at Annual Conference.

In late March, the LBB project finalized a two-page resource: [Sustaining Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs During the Pandemic and Beyond](#). This resource is based on the November 2020 paper, [Open to Change: Libraries Catalyze Small Business Adaption to COVID-19](#), but customized to engage stakeholders outside of libraries in the work libraries have done during COVID-19 to support business.

The ALA project team continues its partnership with Cicero Group for measurement and evaluation. The team is working on updating the data collection instruments as part of the continuous improvement process, based on feedback from cohort members as they use them with business owners in their programs. The data collection instruments, Theory of Change, and Evaluation Framework will all be made available with the project resources at the end of the project period. In addition, the project team will partner with Project Outcome at PLA to offer some of the LBB evaluation materials through the Project Outcome platform. This is an exciting opportunity for library workers and ALA to access and use data to plan programs and services.

The LBB project team has also started an exciting partnership with ALA Editions to produce a book, tentatively called *35 Library Programs to Build Business*. This book will share promising small business development programs in libraries for other libraries to adopt, as well as insights from the LBB project. The book is scheduled for completion in December 2021.

Libraries Build Business will offer two on-demand sessions at ALA Annual Virtual Conference: *Libraries Build Business and Economic Resilience*, and *Pandemic Pivot: Innovative Small Business Development Programs*. Each session will feature a panel of speakers from the cohort. In addition, LBB will host a networking event during the conference to engage others in small business and entrepreneur development and promote the opportunity to join the peer learning network and receive coaching services.

The LBB program has pursued a variety of opportunities to share information about the program, including:

- Monthly Instagram Live Q&As with cohort members, recently featuring [Chris Bourret from Providence Public Library](#), [Sheldon Burke of Broward County Public Library](#) and [Julie Brophy of Baltimore County Public Library](#)
- A webinar to the New Jersey librarians, hosted by the NJ State Library: [Open to Change: Libraries, Small Businesses, and the COVID Crisis](#)
- A RUSA BRASS Webinar: [Libraries Build Business: Overview and Project Update](#)
- National Entrepreneurship Week tweets ([one example](#))
- [An International Women's Day Twitter chat](#)
- A co-authored op-ed with Baltimore County Public Library, "[From business idea to business plan: Baltimore Library 'Entrepreneur Academy' can help get you there](#)" published in the *Baltimore Sun* (co-authors Natalie Edington and Alan Inouye).
- A National Library Week Networking Mixer, attended by 16 new people, in addition to the LBB cohort and project team.
- Monthly Instagram Live events with LBB cohort members. The April event featured [Madeleine Idefonso from Los Angeles Public Library](#), and in May, [Rachael Svoboda from Laramie County Library System](#).

- A presentation at the Maine Library Association conference on May 24: Libraries Build Business in Maine.
- A presentation at the Michigan Library Association *The Business of Libraries* event on April 28.

ALA continues Policy Corps engagement online; prepares to recruit next cohort

After a pandemic year delayed and shifted training and collaboration online for the [third cohort](#) of Policy Corps members, the [Policy Corps Advisory Group](#) is reviewing recent work and looking ahead to recruit the fourth cohort of members. In addition to monthly webinars with the third cohort, Corps members across all years have collaborated on a range of policy and advocacy efforts both in small groups and individually, including:

- collaborating on school library advocacy aimed at the [Biden Administration](#), Congress, Education Secretary Miguel Cardona, and state leaders with AASL and chapter leaders, including [potential opportunities](#) available to schools and school districts through ARPA;
- collaborating on ALA’s comments to the FCC on the Emergency Broadband Benefit program;
- hosting a [virtual library tour](#) with Congressman Andy Levin, co-developing a [new case study](#), writing [op-eds](#), and leading other Congressional outreach as part of the [Build America’s Libraries Act](#) advocacy;
- completing a white paper on controlled digital lending with ALA Past President James Neal;
- developing and publishing an [op-ed](#) flagging concerns about the Copyright Alternative in Small-Claims Enforcement (CASE) Act of 2020 in the Journal of Copyright in Education and Librarianship;
- sharing work developing a local digital equity coalition as part of an ALA UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals Task Force [webinar](#);
- presenting as part of a panel on “Internet Access is a Racial Justice Issue” hosted by Connect Humanity;
- completing research related to [library advocacy work by librarians of color](#); and
- participating in targeted appropriations meetings with House and Senate leaders.

The Advisory Group will meet in June to discuss status and next steps, including recruitment for a fourth cohort in late summer or early fall.

ALA continues engagement with National Network

The National Network continues its monthly Key Contact calls, led by PPA’s Kathi Kromer and Jil Staszewski, Assistant Director of Advocacy Communications, along with David Lusk, founder of Key Advocacy. During these calls, PPA staff provide Key Contacts with any significant updates to ALA’s legislative activities, and facilitates an advocacy action for members to complete. Throughout the spring, Key Contacts were asked to post on social media and contact their members of Congress to commemorate Take Action for Libraries Day and United for Infrastructure Week.

ALA deepens collaboration on civic engagement

In late March, PPA coordinated with the National League of Cities’ (NLC) Local Democracy Initiative to publish an article in NLC’s Cities Speak blog, [Finding our Way Back to Civic Dialogue through Libraries](#). PPA is hosting a program on civic engagement at ALA Annual, [Towards a More Perfect Union: Libraries Engaging Communities in Civic Dialogue](#). The discussion features library staff from public, academic, and school libraries across the country, and will be facilitated by Nancy Kranich, founder and chair of ALA’s Center for Civic Life advisory committee.

ALA supports advocacy, state legislative activity

In addition to supporting state legislative advocacy in collaboration with the Chapter Relations Office, Office for Intellectual Freedom, and ALA units, PPA works with state chapters on specific federal legislation that impacts state and local funding or operations, as well as national campaigns; in recent months, that activity has related to ARPA, Build America’s Libraries Act and ALA’s annual appropriations campaign.

Most states have finished or are winding down their legislative sessions. Bills related to elimination of “harmful to minors” exemptions for public and/or school librarians were defeated in several states including Georgia, Minnesota, Nebraska and Indiana. Excessive filtering bills were mitigated or held in a number of states. Bills inaccurately framing and [banning critical race theory](#) are gaining traction, and have recently passed in a number of states—including [Idaho](#), [Oklahoma](#), and [Tennessee](#)—and are under consideration in others, including [South Carolina](#), and [Michigan](#).

In addition, PPA has consulted with states on legislation relating to broadband, eBooks, funding, school libraries, and other bills that impact libraries, library workers, or library patrons. For example, ALA has consulted with the Tennessee Association of School Librarians in their advocacy for passage of a [bill](#) that would reestablish the state school library coordinator position at the Department of Education. The bill did not advance out of committee this session but has gained support and is expected to be reintroduced next year.

PPA collected and shared a summary of state legislative priorities with chapter leaders and state legislative chairs. For 2021, in addition to COVID recovery, top issues track closely to previous years and include funding, school libraries, and shared resources. PPA also has assisted advocates in states including New Jersey, Nebraska, Illinois, Ohio, Kansas, Maine, and Michigan on a range of local issues, from governance to funding. PPA submitted numerous joint letters on behalf of ALA President, Julius Jefferson and AASL President, Kathy Carroll, including to the [DC Mayor and City Council](#) in support of DC school librarians.

On the heels of its successful partnership with the Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission, PPA was contacted by the White House Historical Association about partnering to distribute a children’s picture book to underserved public and school libraries in the DC-Maryland-Virginia metro area (DMV), with an author visit to one of the donation recipients. That distribution will happen during June.

In collaboration with the Chapter Relations Office, PPA co-hosted Chapter Advocacy Exchanges in April, [Libraries and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#), and May, [Build America’s Libraries Act: States Advocate for Library Infrastructure](#). PPA also hosted a webinar on ARPA for AASL chapter leaders, and developed a [toolkit of resources](#) for libraries of all types to advocate for ARPA funding at the state and local level.

On May 13, PPA’s Kathi Kromer, Associate Executive Director, gave a virtual presentation to the Special Libraries Association (SLA) Public Policy Advisory Committee. On May 18, Kathi Kromer participated in a recorded interview with Andrew Albanese for [U.S. Book Show](#) regarding ALA’s overall public policy program and advocacy efforts.

Committee on Library Advocacy (COLA)

COLA reviewed and endorsed two Council resolutions prior to their presentation at Midwinter: “in Support of Broadband as a Human Right” and “in Opposition to Facial Recognition Software in Libraries.” COLA was one of three committees that was represented on the Vaccine Working Group. (See separate report.) PPA’s Shawnda Hines conducted an hourlong op-ed writing workshop for COLA members; and an ad hoc group was formed to develop a school library advocacy tool.

COLA’s Ecosystem Subcommittee continues its outreach to states—with ecosystem efforts launched in Tennessee, Michigan, and Oklahoma—and has contacted ALA divisions to ensure that leaders across ALA are aware of the One Voice Toolkit and its applications within the association. The subcommittee also met with COSLA leadership to explore opportunities to partner together on state implementation.

PPA expands outreach to state, local library communicators

On April 29, PPA Assistant Director, Communications Shawnda Hines presented a workshop for the first in a series of professional development webinars for the Library Marketing and Communications Conference, [Harnessing your advocacy powers: Library communicators as influencers](#). The presentation examined how some library communicators across the nation are sharing success stories and challenges to reach elected leaders and other community influencers. Based on ALA successes, the webinar highlighted proven strategies and tactics for cultivating ongoing support for libraries and provided resources to demonstrate your library value using various communications assets.

PPA Committees lead on advocacy resources, engage with ALA divisions

During School Library Month (March), Committee on Library Advocacy (COLA) member Kathy Lester published an [op-ed](#) about school library legislation in Michigan. The committee COLA will release a school library advocacy infographic for release at ALA Annual. COLA is co-sponsoring a program at ALA Annual called [Learning Library Advocacy by Doing: LIS Graduate Student Advocacy Internships](#); panelists include COLA member Anthony Chow, Chair, Justin de la Cruz, and PPA’s Megan Cusick, Assistant Director of State Advocacy. COLA’s Ecosystem Subcommittee’s continued outreach includes a June article by member Rachel Minkin for *College & Research Libraries News*.

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PPA staff provides advocacy communications training to ALA members

In alignment with the ALA pivot strategy for increasing meaningful membership engagement opportunities, PPA communications staff created new resources and led several workshops to broaden advocate skills:

- **Crafting an elevator speech, January 28:** PPA Assistant Director of Communications Shawnda Hines led a workshop on crafting and delivering an elevator speech for the Libraries Build Business cohort. Designed to support leaders in deepening engagement of stakeholders and various audiences, the workshop outlined a plan to concisely describe their entrepreneurship programs so as to move listeners from the information stage to involvement. The workshop provided opportunity for participants to practice creating an elevator speech using a “MadLib” for libraries.

- **Understanding the federal appropriations process, February 17:** PPA Assistant Director of Advocacy Communications Jil Staszewski held a training session on the federal appropriations process for the Policy Corps Group 3 participants. The workshop provided cohort members with a detailed explanation of steps in the appropriation process, while noting the special circumstances in timing for 2021 with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Participants were shown the importance of grassroots advocacy for ALA's annual #FundLibraries campaigns, and the significance of gathering as many signatures as possible for the 'Dear Appropriator' letters that are circulated in both the House and the Senate.
- **Writing and pitching an op-ed, March 4:** Shawnda Hines presented a workshop on the fundamentals of strategic op-ed writing and pitching to COLA members. The hourlong program provided authentic examples of effective op-eds and letters to the editor written by library advocates. Participants were given a format and several prompts for starting an op-ed on local funding for public, school and academic libraries. PPA staff introduced ALA video and print resources on writing letters to the editor and [engaging traditional media](#) to draw attention to library issues.
- **Advocating through social media, March 22:** As part of the National Network advocacy program, PPA brought together advocates from Florida, Alabama and New York to learn about the most effective ways to engage with members of Congress and other elected officials on social media. Leveraging PPA's extensive experience working with congressional offices on social media engagements, PPA Communications Associate Ian Ware presented "Manners with your Members: Social Media Tips for Engaging with elected officials." The workshop showed Network participants best practices for engaging with members of Congress, strategies for most effectively capturing elected officials' attention and tips on how to turn social media engagement into legislative victories. National Network participants will use these skills to continue their advocacy work in their communities, deepening the connections and relationships they have developed with legislators and legislative staff through the program.
- **Advocating in a digital world, March 23:** As part of REFORMA's two-part [Together from Home: Libraries Strong](#) event led by ALA Past president Loida Garcia-Febo, Shawnda Hines spoke to the international audience on advocacy in a digital era. Live-streamed on the REFORMA YouTube channel, the programs included speakers from Brazil, Hong Kong, Peru, Romania and Singapore.

PPA reports to ALA Council on access to COVID-19 vaccines

During ALA Virtual Midwinter 2021, members of ALA Council introduced resolution ALA CD #45, requesting that ALA ask the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to include library workers in priority phase 1b recommendations for receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. Floor discussion clarified that the CDC prioritizes industries and not workers. Council members raised concern that the resolution might violate ALA's protocol for working on state and local issues.

After discussion, an [amended resolution](#) was adopted by Council, affirming "that library workers have a fundamental right to a safe work environment. This includes, but is not limited to, a library or other work setting that minimizes an employee's environmental risk of exposure to Covid-19." The resolution also directed a working group from the Committee on Legislation (Joe Thompson, Chair, and Lori Fisher), Chapter Relations Committee (Amy Lappin, Chair, and Brianna Hoffman) and the Committee on Library Advocacy (Justin de la Cruz, Chair and Cindy Bhatti) to gather information and provide a report to Council. The work group surveyed State Chapter leaders, conducted a scan of relevant state and local news, reviewed CDC immunization guidelines, interviewed librarians working in states that have played

a role in advocating for priority phasing of library workers, and reviewed the [ALA Protocol for State and Local Issues](#).

The Vaccine Working Group members strongly support the importance of library workers being vaccinated. The working group believes that an ALA statement asking the CDC to include library workers in vaccine phase 1b will have unintentional and potentially adverse consequences on state and local advocacy efforts in the future. It is the choice of the state chapter whether to invoke the existing federal phase 1c designation and/or pursue a change in state/local vaccination priorities given their specific knowledge about those vaccination plans, phases, and the local political climate.

It is clear from the chapter survey results that the desire and ability to prioritize library workers for the vaccine varies dramatically not just by state, but by locality within states. Given this advocacy environment, a local/state approach is best and fits within the protocol created by ALA leadership in 2008 to provide assistance only with the permission of and in coordination with the state chapter.

PPA ACTIVITY on POLICY ISSUES

PPA is a national voice for libraries and library workers. The following list includes a sampling of congressional testimony, comments filed with federal agencies and coalition letters which ALA has endorsed with its name, a coveted asset among allies and coalition partners from across the political spectrum:

Coalition and Office Letters

- January 4- America's Libraries: Essential Partners in the Arts and Humanities
- January 6- Letter to the Education Review Team, Biden-Harris Transition Team
- January 8- Letter to the Biden-Harris Transition Agency Review Team for the FCC on E-rate Funding to Address the Connectivity Gap, E-rate Eligibility of Network Security, and Tribal Library E-rate Eligibility
- January 13- AFSCME Coalition Letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer calling for \$1 trillion in aid to state, local, and tribal governments <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/Sign-ons/Large%20Coalition%20Calls%20for%20State%20and%20Local%20Aid%201-13-21.pdf>
- January 26- ALA endorses Dr. Miguel A. Cardona to be the next U.S. Secretary of Education in a letter to the Senate https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/Sign-ons/ALASupportsCardona_USEduSecretary.pdf
- January 28- Letter urging the speedy nomination and confirmation of a fifth commissioner to the Federal Communications Commission https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/Sign-ons/letter_on_fifth_fcc_commissioner.pdf
- February 12- Signed onto coalition letter, Coalition Supports State and Local Aid <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/libfunding/fed/Coalition%20supports%20state%20and%20local%202-12-21.pdf>
- February 16- Signed onto Coalition Letter Requesting a Federal Moratorium on the use of Facial Recognition Technology (FRT)
- March 3- Signed onto Coalition Letter to the US Senate Regarding the Emergency Connectivity Fund and Addressing the Homework Gap

- March 8- Letter to Rep. Beatty in support of resolution supporting goals and ideals of National Deaf History Month
- March 10- Signed onto Letter to Secretary of the Dept. of Homeland Security Regarding Notice of Proposed Rulemaking 85 Fed. Reg. 74162, Collection of Biometric Data from Aliens Upon Entry to and Departure from the United States
- March 12- Coauthored Letter to President Biden in support of review of semiconductor supply chain and availability of education technology
- March 4, sent Coalition Letter to the US Senate Regarding the Emergency Connectivity Fund and Addressing the Homework Gap https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/telecom/broadband/Hmwrk%20Gap%20Coalition%20Ltr%20to%20Senate%20March%204%202021_Marijke%20Visser.pdf
- March 8, sent Letter to Rep. Beatty in support of resolution supporting goals and ideals of National Deaf history month
- March 10, sent Letter to Secretary of the Dept. of Homeland Security Regarding Notice of Proposed Rulemaking 85 Fed. Reg. 74162, Collection of Biometric Data from Aliens Upon Entry to and Departure from the United States
- March 12, sent Letter to President Biden in support of review of semiconductor supply chain and availability of education technology
- April 12, sent Letter to Miguel Cardona in support of Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/Sign-ons/FINAL%20Consumer%20Advocates%20PSLF%20Letter%2004122021_Kevin%20Maher.pdf
- April 16, sent Letter to the Secretary of Education Applauding the Inclusion of Funding for School Librarians in the American Rescue Plan Act https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/libfunding/school/ARPA_EDletter_American%20Library%20Association%20pd_Kevin%20Maher.pdf
- April 19, sent Letter to West Orange Public Schools Opposing Cuts to Library Staff https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/libfunding/school/West%20Orange%20Public%20Schools_04192021.pdf
- April 23, sent letter to Mayor Muriel Bowser urging that DC Public Schools be appropriately staffed with certified school librarians https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/libfunding/school/DC%20Public%20Schools_04232021.pdf
- April 29, sent Letter to the Superintendent Clearview Regional High School District Opposing the Dismantling of the School Library Media Program https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/libfunding/school/Clearview%20Regional%20High%20School%20District_04292.pdf
- May 5, sent Letter to FCC Regarding the Emergency Connectivity Fund, Homework Gap, and Modernizing the E-rate Program https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/telecom/broadband/Remote%20Learning%20Coalition%20Ex%20Parte%205.5.2021%20f_Marijke%20Visser.pdf
- May 10, sent Letter to Glen Ridge Public Schools Opposing Cuts to School Library Staff https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/libfunding/school/Glen%20Ridge%20Public%20Schools_05102021.pdf
- May 10, sent Letter to West Orange Public Schools Applauding the Restoration of School Library Staff https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/libfunding/school/West%20Orange%20Public%20Schools_05102021.pdf

Comments

- February 8- FCC: Comments Filed in the Matter of Modernizing the E-Rate Program for Schools and Libraries | Petition for Declaratory Relief and Petition for Rulemaking Allowing Additional Use of E-Rate Funds for K-12 Cybersecurity
- February 16- FCC: Comments filed Addressing the Homework Gap through the E-rate Program https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/telecom/erate/ALA_Homework_Gap_Comments_02162021.pdf
- February 16- FCC: Reply Comments of ALA Before the FCC in the Matter of Emergency Broadband Benefit Program
- March 5- US Copyright Office: Comments filed by Library Copyright Alliance regarding Digital Copyright Act of 2021 draft https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/copyright/dmca/pdfs/Tillis_Digital-Copyright-Act_LCA_3.pdf
- March 10- US Copyright Office: Reply Comments of the Library Copyright Alliance to Oppositions to Proposed Class 5 Petition
- April 5: Comments filed regarding The Emergency Connectivity Fund for Educational Connections and Devices to Address the Homework Gap during the Pandemic https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/telecom/erate/ALA_ECF_Comments_04052021.pdf
- April 26: Library Copyright Alliance Comments On Case Act Notice Of Inquiry https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/copyright/copyrightlegislation/CASE_NOI.pdf
- May 10: Library Copyright Alliance Reply Comments On Case Act Notice Of Inquiry https://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/copyright/copyrightlegislation/reply_CASE_NOI.pdf

Additional examples of ALA member social media posts about library facility needs during United For Infrastructure Week 2021 (see description above):

2020-2021 ALA CD#30
2021 ALA Virtual Annual Conference

