March 24, 2026

The Honorable Ted Cruz, Chairman
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cruz and Ranking Member Cantwell:

In response to the Committee's recent hearing titled "Liability or Deniability? Platform Power as Section 230 Turns 30," the American Library Association (ALA)[1] and the Association of Research Libraries (ARL)[2] reiterate our opposition to any repeal of Section 230, and we ask that any proposal to reform Section 230 consider potential unintended consequences for libraries.

Section 230 is commonly associated with large social media platforms, but its protections extend far beyond Big Tech. The statute explicitly covers libraries as providers of "interactive computer services,"[3] and for good reason. As long as there have been libraries, they have organized, curated, and provided platforms for others to speak. Today, libraries engage in these activities online —the very activities Section 230 protects. Libraries host online catalogs, digital archives, remote access services, and community discussion forums that depend on these protections. Thanks to Section 230, libraries can continue to provide these venues for public discourse and community-engaged research and implement content-moderation policies, without fear of incurring liability for third-party speech or for taking action to remove it.

During the hearing, questions arose about algorithmic amplification. We want to be clear: amending Section 230 to strip protections for algorithmic amplification would expose platforms to liability any time they recommend, promote, rank, or arrange third-party content. The

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[1] Representing the nation's 124,000 libraries of all types, ALA is the foremost national organization providing resources to inspire library and information professionals to transform their communities through essential programs and services. For 150 years, ALA has been the trusted voice for academic, public, school, government, tribal, and special libraries, advocating for the profession and the library's role in enhancing learning and ensuring access to information for all.

[2] ARL is a nonprofit membership organization of research libraries and archives in major public and private universities, federal government agencies, and large public institutions in Canada and the US. ARL champions research libraries and archives, develops visionary leaders, and shapes policy for the equitable advancement of knowledge.

[3] 47 U.S.C. § 230(f)(2) ("interactive computer service" means "any information service, system, or access software provider that provides or enables computer access by multiple users to a computer server, including specifically a service or system that provides access to the Internet and such systems operated or services offered by **libraries** or educational institutions") (emphasis added).

consequences would reach far beyond social media — library discovery tools, personalized recommendations, and research would all be at risk.

Revision or repeal of Section 230 could damage public access to information, rich conversation, vibrant scholarly debate, and enhanced public services. It could limit platform choice, competition, and innovation. We respectfully ask that the Committee consider the benefits of Section 230 for libraries in its deliberations.

Respectfully submitted,

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cc: Members, Senate Commerce Committee