

2016-2017 ALA Tribute #1  
2017 ALA Midwinter Meeting

*This memorial resolution was adopted by the ALA Council on Tuesday, January 24, 2017*

A Tribute Resolution Honoring Emily Sheketoff Upon Her Retirement

Whereas, as Executive Director of the American Library Association's Washington Office, Emily Sheketoff has been at the forefront of legislative and policy issues involving libraries at the national level for 17 years,

Whereas immediately following September 11, 2001, ALA's Washington Office, under the leadership of Emily Sheketoff, was among the earliest groups fighting against provisions in the USA PATRIOT Act that compromised the privacy of library patrons. The ALA Washington Office held the first in a series of briefing sessions for librarians to give them advice on protecting their patrons while complying with the PATRIOT Act;

Whereas in 2003 Emily Sheketoff was instrumental in securing an agreement among representatives from every library organization to back a major change in the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), thereby doubling the amount of base funding for state grants and appreciably increasing the amount of federal funds flowing to smaller states;

Whereas Emily Sheketoff and the Washington Office, working with Representative Peter Hoekstra, was instrumental in the passage of HR 13, the Reauthorization of the Museum and Library Services Act, which increased funds for the federal e-rate program and supports internet access for thousands of public and school libraries nationwide;

Whereas Emily Sheketoff worked for eleven years to statutorily define libraries as authorized beneficiaries of federal workforce funding through passage in 2014 of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act, and that legislative victory caused the Department of Labor to send out a Notice of Employment Training to every state's Department of Labor instructing them to reach out to local public libraries and include them in the delivery of services;

Whereas Emily Sheketoff worked for more than a decade to include language for school libraries in an amendment for reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and, working with Senator Jack Reed, to establish the Improving Literacy through School Libraries and the Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) programs;

Whereas through tireless effort Emily Sheketoff achieved a significant legislative victory with the passage of the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) on December 10, 2015: legislation that includes new provisions authorizing school districts to include in their local plans how they will assist schools in developing effective school library programs to provide students an opportunity to develop digital literacy skills and improve academic achievement;

## A Tribute Resolution Honoring Emily Sheketoff Upon Her Retirement/2

Whereas Emily Sheketoff worked with the National Education Association Foundation (NEA) and the Dollar General Foundation to create a program to benefit school libraries affected by disasters through Dollar General's Beyond Words Disaster Relief Fund.

Whereas in 2008 Emily Sheketoff worked to change the Perkins Law to make librarians eligible for student loan forgiveness programs;

Whereas Emily Sheketoff increased participation in National Library Legislative Day to more than 400 people each year by introducing "newbie training" to raise the comfort level of new participants and working with the leadership of ALA's many divisions to tailor schedules to meet each of their unique needs and address their specific policy issues;

Whereas Emily Sheketoff coordinated a legislative "Day on the Hill" in 2007 which was so successful that, in 2010, a rally on the Senate grounds was followed by 2000 library supporters walking the halls of Congress promoting library issues;

Whereas in 2016 Emily Sheketoff worked with a Presidential Personnel Committee to nominate a qualified librarian to serve as the next Librarian of Congress and, once nominated, to secure Senate confirmation of Dr. Carla Hayden;

Whereas the Washington Office under the leadership of Emily Sheketoff has advocated effectively for libraries in many fora and many forms on copyright, Net Neutrality, expanded broadband access, and many other topics;

Whereas the Washington Office under the leadership of Emily Sheketoff consistently has leveraged the valuable grassroots support of ALA members and other library supporters to greatly expand federal library funding through such programs as E-Rate program and Broadband Technology Opportunities, which have dramatically expanded internet connectivity for libraries and their millions of patrons nationwide;

Where the Washington Office under the leadership of Emily Sheketoff has advanced such significant American Library Association initiatives as library access to ebooks via the Digital Content Working Group, the development and implementation of the National Public Policy Agenda for Libraries; and many more;

Whereas Emily Sheketoff's leadership and vision have greatly contributed to the success of ALA's efforts to increase digital literacy, digital inclusion, and Core Values and Programmatic Priorities of the Association;

Whereas, under Emily Sheketoff's direction, in 2016 the ALA Washington Office was recognized in both 2015 and 2016 among a handful of public sector organizations for securing a "Top Lobbying Victory" in each of those years according to influential Washington newspaper *The Hill*;

## A Tribute Resolution Honoring Emily Sheketoff Upon Her Retirement/3

Whereas Emily Sheketoff has trained hundreds of library advocates and mentored scores of Committee on Legislation (COL) committee members, thus making our association stronger and providing all ALA members and leaders with a deeper understanding of the complexities of federal legislation now ingrained in the organization; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members:

1. recognizes that – through her tireless leadership, peerless insight and legendary persistence and the many resulting professional achievements as Executive Director of ALA’s Washington Office, Emily Sheketoff has affected positive change that has benefited hundreds of millions of Americans;
2. commends her for her dedication to and consistent advancement of ALA’s policies and librarians’ most deeply held principles; and
3. expresses its profound appreciation and deep gratitude for her 17 years at the helm of the ALA Washington Office and wishes her well in all the years to come.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association  
Tuesday, January 24, 2017, in Atlanta, Georgia



Keith Michael Fiels  
Executive Director and Secretary of the ALA Council