

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: *Report on Washington Office Activities*

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

For information purposes. No actions requested.

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

No action requested.

CONTACT PERSON:

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DRAFT OF MOTION:

N/A

DATE: *March 28, 2014*

BACKGROUND:

The report provides information on recent ALA Washington Office initiatives and projects.

Attachments: Executive Board Report on Washington Office Activities

WASHINGTON OFFICE NEWS

Policy Discussions Continue at ALA Midwinter Meeting

Large numbers of attendees participated in policy sessions hosted by the ALA Washington Office at the 2014 ALA Midwinter Meeting, including conference sessions that explored E-rate funding, copyright lawsuits, ebook access, federal depository libraries and internet filtering. More than one hundred attendees gathered to hear insider information on last June's National Security Agency leak from *Guardian* Editor Spencer Ackerman. During other ALA Washington Office sessions, publishing and library experts discussed the best ways libraries can bring together authors and readers in the digital age. In one copyright session, November 2013 Google Legal Counsel Fred von Lohmann discussed the Google Book Search lawsuit court ruling. Finally, library and policy leaders at the conference detailed ALA's vision for an E-rate 2.0 that better serves America's libraries and communities.

On a related note, OITP and Google, Inc. jointly sponsored a Google Glass demonstration booth at the 2014 ALA Midwinter Meeting. For two days, crowds of meeting attendees lined up to try Google Glass, the new display device from Google that's worn like a pair of glasses and rests just above your eyes. Wilson L. White, public policy manager of Glass at Google, and technical members of the Google Glass Team were on hand to talk about the wearable computers.

ALA Washington Office Launches Video Advocacy Campaign

In January, the ALA Washington Office launched "Libraries Matter," a series of four videos that highlight the ways that funds from the Library Services Technology Act are used by libraries to help patrons. LSTA funds are used to support digital literacy, high-speed internet access, small business assistance, job assistance, ebooks and New Americans. The visual videos can be used by library advocates to educate policymakers and Capitol Hill staff about library issues and show legislators the ways that libraries impact their communities. Access the videos: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5E1ShbPqE4CQ1v86FXWJfZLSjSaXngIM>.

OFFICE FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY (OITP)

OITP, OIF Join SXSW Technology Policy Discussions

ALA leaders joined technology policy conversations at the South by Southwest EDU and Interactive conferences in Austin from March 7-11, 2014. ALA staff and other library organizations engaged attendees, panelists, policy-makers, startups, and venture capitalists about the ongoing importance and relevance of libraries and librarians to the tech industry. Privacy and the "internet of things" were among the topics on the agenda for the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) and the Office for Information Technology Policy. ALA also joined members and sister library organizations at the joint "Innovative Booth for Libraries." SXSWi is a premier technology and policy conference featuring some of the world's most forward-looking thinkers, emerging technologies, and inspiring digital creators. OIF Director Barbara Jones spoke on a panel about high school students and privacy issues, while OITP Program Director Larra Clark spoke on the panel "Innovating Policy for the Internet of Things."

ALA Joins WiFi Coalition

The American Library Association has joined WiFiForward, a new coalition calling on policymakers to unleash unlicensed spectrum for Wi-Fi and other uses. Recent analyses indicate that Wi-Fi in our homes, businesses, libraries and schools is becoming congested by a deluge of data from an increasing number of devices, applications and services connecting to the Internet without wires. WiFiForward is an ad hoc group of companies, organizations and public sector institutions working to alleviate the Wi-Fi spectrum crunch. Go to www.wififorward.org for more information.

ALA, ARL and EDUCAUSE Re-engage FCC on Network Neutrality

On January 14, 2014, the U.S. Court of Appeals ruled to strike down most of the Open Internet Order, giving commercial companies the astounding legal authority to block Internet traffic, offer preferential treatment to certain Internet services or applications, and steer users to certain web sites based on their own commercial interests. In response, Barbara Stripling published an op-ed, titled "[Why Net Neutrality's Demise Hurts the Poor Most](#)," in *Wired* magazine, which received a tremendous amount of technology policy and library media coverage. Later, ALA with ARL and EDUCAUSE sent a letter to FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler, offering to work with the FCC in developing new policies that preserve network neutrality and incorporate the essential roles libraries play in this area.

E-rate Advocacy Continues

In February, ALA responded to Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Wheeler's E-rate speech, where he emphasized the crucial role of libraries as the "community on-ramp to the world of information." Since then, OITP staff have been in contact with FCC officials every week to advocate for ALA's position, including multiple in-person meetings at FCC headquarters. In March, the Federal Communications Commission released a Public Notice, warranting further public input to help the Commission determine the best path forward on E-rate. In ALA's comments and throughout the process we have sought input and feedback from a wide range of librarians and expect to do so again through the guidance of the ALA E-rate Task Force, other ALA member leaders, and expert consultants. Comments are due April 7, 2014, with reply comments due April 21, 2014. OITP leaders have had several meetings with FCC commissioners and staff, both as ALA, and as a member of inside-the-beltway coalitions.

In mid-March, the Federal Communications Commission dived into rural broadband needs and challenges during an all-day workshop that took place in Washington, D.C. The workshop brought together educators, decision makers, policy and technology experts, and telecommunications leaders to help the FCC generate policies that will impact high-speed internet deployment in rural, high-cost areas. Maine State Librarian Linda Lord discussed the role of libraries in rural communities on a panel highlighting the critical need for high-speed broadband in rural areas for individual consumers, businesses, and community anchor organizations.

ALA Joins Internet Archive in Filing Supreme Court Amicus Brief

In March, the American Library Association and the Internet Archive joined forces to file a “friend of the court” brief in *David Leon Riley v. State of California* and *United States v. Brima Wurie*, two Appellate cases joined at the Supreme Court to examine the constitutionality of cell phone searches without a warrant after police arrests. In the amicus brief, both nonprofit organizations argue that warrantless cell phone searches violate privacy principles protected by the Fourth Amendment. In the brief, the Internet Archive and the American Library Association argued that reading choices are at the heart of the expectation of personal privacy guaranteed by the Fourth Amendment. Allowing police officers to rummage through the smartphones of arrestees is akin to giving government officials permission to search a person’s entire library and reading history.

Four Local Libraries Honored for Offering Cutting-edge Services

Four libraries were recognized in February by the American Library Association (ALA) for offering cutting-edge technologies in library services, honoring programs in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada; Bridgewater, New Jersey; Raleigh, North Carolina; and University Park, Pennsylvania. The recognition, which is presented by the ALA Office for Information Technology Policy and the Library & Information Technology Association, showcases libraries that are serving their communities using novel and innovative methods. Libraries or library service areas selected will be highlighted through various ALA publications and featured in a program at the 2014 ALA Annual Conference.

ALA Joins Organizations Concerned About Rural Issues in Letter to FCC

On March 5, 2014, ALA signed on to a letter urging the FCC to move forward as quickly as possible to implement a Connect America Fund (CAF) mechanism for small, rural, rate-of-return-regulated carriers that will provide sufficient and predictable support for broadband-capable networks across all of rural America. In total, 37 organizations signed the letter including the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools, and NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association, among others.

OITP Director Discusses Ebooks at Connecticut Meeting

In March, OITP director Alan Inouye participated in the Connecticut State Library’s Ebook Symposium, a one-day event where library and publishing experts explored the current state of ebook affairs and the future of ebook lending for libraries, publishers, and readers. As a presenter at the statewide ebook conference, Inouye discussed the large number of challenges faced by libraries working to meet patron demands for ebooks, including concerns related to fair pricing, equitable access to ebook titles, digital preservation, privacy, digital rights management and accommodations for readers with limited vision.

ALA Participates in U.S. Copyright Office Orphan Works Roundtable

In March, OITP participated in a U.S. Copyright Office roundtable on orphan works, which are works still protected by copyright whose rights holder or author is not known or cannot be found. Users of these works—libraries, educators, private companies, other creators, the general public—want to get permission to use these works in ways that go beyond fair use or other user exceptions. Moving forward, the U.S. Copyright Office is now accepting public comments on orphan works legislation. The window for public comments closes April 14, 2014.

OITP Expands Policy Staff

In March, Charlie Wapner began work as an information policy analyst for OITP. Charlie will work on a broad range of topics that includes copyright, licensing, telecommunications and E-rate, and provide support for our new *Policy Revolution!* initiative sponsored by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Charlie comes to the American Library Association from the Office of Representative Ron Barber (D-AZ) where he was a legislative fellow. Earlier, Charlie also served as a legislative correspondent for Representative Mark Critz (D-PA). Charlie also interned in the offices of Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Pennsylvania Governor Edward Rendell. After completing his B.A. in Diplomatic History at the University of Pennsylvania, Charlie received his M.S. in public policy and management from Carnegie Mellon University.

ALA Presents at Digital Book World Conference

On January 13, 2014, ALA held a pre-conference workshop at the 2014 Digital Book World conference in New York. Featured in this workshop were Nora Rawlinson of EarlyWord, Wendy Bartlett of the Cuyahoga County Public Library, Maja Thomas, a former Senior Vice President of Hachette Book Group, and ALA OITP Program Director Larra Clark.

Education, Library Leaders Hosted Interactive Copyright Tweetchat

On Tuesday, January 7, 2014, school principals, superintendents, librarians and educators participated in an interactive question-and-answer tweetchat with copyright expert, OITP staff member and bestselling author Carrie Russell. The interactive social media event was hosted jointly by the National Association of Secondary School Principals, AASA: The School Superintendents Association, the American Library Association and the National Association of Elementary School Principals. More than 200 Twitter users participated in the tweetchat, which reached nearly 260,000 users and made more than 4,600,000 impressions, according to a social media analytical report.

OITP Takes Over Twitter for Teen Tech Week

On March 13th, technology policy leaders from OITP discussed digital learning via the Young Adult Library Services Association's @Yalsa Twitter account. As part of Teen Tech Week, OITP joined several businesses, nonprofits, library organizations and Internet companies in highlighting the digital tools, resources and services that libraries offer to teens and their families. OITP covered a variety of topics during the all-day social media event, including current technology policies, internet filtering, copyright fair use, internet access and net neutrality. Nearly 300 users (with more than 690,000 followers combined) participated in the chat. Overall, the tweets in the day-long event made close to 4,000,000 impressions.

OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS (OGR)

Register Now: Library Advocates Gear Up for National Library Legislative Day

Hundreds of librarians, parents and library supporters will travel to Washington, D.C. on May 5th and 6th to meet with members of Congress and discuss key library issues during the American Library Association's 40th annual National Library Legislative Day. The event will focus on supporting federal funding for our nation's libraries. Those who cannot attend National Library Legislative Day in person will have the option to contact Congress as part of Virtual Library Legislative Day. To register for the advocacy day, go to www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/nlld.

Spending Bill Passed for 2014 Fiscal Year

In January 2014, President Obama signed a \$1.1 trillion spending bill to fund the U.S. federal government through September 2014. The legislation partially restores funding to the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)—the primary source of annual funding for libraries in the federal budget—that were dramatically cut in the 2013 fiscal year under sequestration. The total amount appropriated for LSTA increased from \$175,044,000 to \$180,909,000 for fiscal year 2014. President Obama's spending bill included language that supports open access—a win for libraries and public access to federally-funded information. While we celebrate this milestone in open access, we are also aware that we have not gone far enough; additional provisions found in the Fair Access to Science and Technology Research Act would make this effort complete.

The 2014 fiscal year spending bill also included funding for Innovative Approaches to Literacy, a competitive grant under the Department of Education that requires that at least half of the funds go to low-income school libraries. This program was appropriated at \$25 million for the 2014 fiscal year. This is a \$2.4 million cut from funding for the 2013 fiscal year. Local education agencies in low-income areas can compete for the grant to help update school libraries with books and other materials.

Federal Library Funding Cut in Proposed Budget

In March, President Barack Obama released his budget request for the 2015 fiscal year. The proposed budget for the LSTA Act falls \$2 million short from the \$180.9 million enacted by the U.S. Congress for the 2014 fiscal year. The big hit came to the state grant program, with slight increases to the set aside for Native Americans and Hawaiians and the National Leadership grants. On a conference call with stakeholders, Institute of Museum and Library Services Director Susan Hildreth discussed the Laura Bush 21st Century grants programs, saying that her agency is working on a National Continuing Education Platform so library employees can continue their education around new services and technologies.

On a disappointing note, the President's budget did not include any resources for school libraries. The budget did, however, include professional development funding for school librarians, teachers and leaders who provide high-speed internet access to students. The Obama Administration requested that \$200 million dollars be allocated to ConnectEDucators, a new initiative that will ensure that school professionals are well-prepared to use high-speed internet

resources in a way that improves classroom instruction and student learning. The ConnectEDucators program is an extension of the Administration's ConnectED initiative.

Additionally, President Obama's budget requests funding support for school librarians through the Department of Education's Race to the Top program. The Equity and Opportunity Program assists states and school districts in high poverty areas in offering the best educators and school librarians. Currently, there are two sign-on letters currently circulating in the House and the Senate: one supporting the Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) program and the other supporting LSTA funding. Both letters are asking for support for these programs in the 2015 fiscal year federal budget. Additionally, the ALA, PLA, ALSC, AASL and the Medical Library Association, along with 1,060 other labor, health, and education organization sent a letter to Congress asking that \$163.6 billion be allocated to the House and Senate Labor, Health, and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittees for FY 2015.

ALA Joins in Supporting the FOIA Oversight and Implementation Act of 2014

In February, ALA united with 26 other organizations in a letter to members of the House of Representatives urging them to vote for H.R. 1211, the FOIA Oversight and Implementation Act of 2014. H.R. 1211 is a bipartisan bill that would "amend the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to promote greater government transparency and accountability." On February 25, 2014, the bill passed the House and a day later was sent to the Senate where it was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

ALA Honors Leaders with Freedom of Information Awards

During the 16th Annual Freedom of Information Day in Washington, D.C., ALA awarded the James Madison Award to President Obama's Review Group on Intelligence and Communications Technologies, the body of intelligence and legal experts tasked with assessing the United States' surveillance practices. The James Madison Award honors, celebrates and recognizes groups and individuals who have championed for public access to government information. Additionally, ALA awarded the grassroots advocacy Eileen Cooke Award to the Open Government Project of the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey. ALA Immediate Past President Maureen Sullivan presented the awards at the Freedom of Information Day event.

Congress Introduces Harmful Open Access Act

In March, Reps. Lamar Smith (R-TX) and Larry Bucshon (R-IN) introduced the Frontiers in Innovation, Research, Science and Technology Act (H.R. 4186), a bill that challenges public access to tax-payer funded research. ALA stands with the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition in opposing Section 303 of this bill, a provision that would create unnecessary obstacles to the public's ability to access research funded by tax-payers. ALA is encouraging members to contact their representatives to express their opposition to a bill that would delay the public's right to information.

ALA Recognizes Rep. Holt's Leadership

We are sad to report that Representative Rush Holt (D-NJ) announced his retirement from the U.S. House of Representatives in February, ending 16 years of service. The American Library Association expresses its deepest appreciation for the distinguished work of Rep. Holt, a leader who has worked tirelessly to support public, academic and school libraries nationwide. Rep. Holt introduced the Workforce Investments through Local Libraries Act to integrate libraries into job training efforts. Rep. Holt has also been a consistent supporter of the Library Services and Technology Act, the only federal funding program exclusively for libraries.

ALA Leads on Privacy Issues

In January 2014, ALA President Barbara Stripling released a statement regarding a speech President Barack Obama made on the National Security Agency surveillance program. In her statement, Stripling called for permanent changes to the NSA data collection program and repeated her support for the USA Freedom Act, a bill that will improve the balance between terrorism prevention and personal privacy protection. In February, ALA participated in the Day We Fight Back, a day when thousands of websites hosted banners urging people to call Congress to stop mass surveillance.