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Workforce Investment Act (WIA) National Library Legislative Day May 5–6, 2014

ALA's Position: The ALA asks the U.S. Senate to move forward on reauthorizing the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and:

- **Authorize public libraries that carry out employment, training, and literacy services as additional one-stop partners; and,**
- **Require inclusion of public libraries in state plans as well as descriptions of the actions that will be taken by the state to foster communication, coordination, and partnerships with non-profit organizations; and,**
- **Require inclusion of public libraries in local and state plans as well as descriptions of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to better coordinate workforce development programs with employment, training, and literacy services carried out by non-profit organizations.**

Background:

The **House WIA bill** (H.R. 803, the Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills Act), which passed the House on March 15, 2013, on a 215-202 vote, includes provisions that:

- Ensure the state workforce investment plan includes a description of the actions that will be taken by the state to foster communication, coordination, and partnerships with non-profit organizations—including public libraries;
- Ensure the local state workforce investment plan includes a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to better coordinate workforce development programs with employment, training, and literacy services carried out by non-profit organizations—including libraries; and
- Authorize public libraries that carry out employment, training, and literacy services as additional one-stop partners so they can better assist with workforce development activities.

The **Senate WIA bill** (S. 1356, the Workforce Investment Act of 2013), has been reported from the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee on July 31, 2013, and includes provisions that:

- Enhance digital literacy skills (as defined in section 202 of the Museum and Library Services Act (20 U.S.C. 9101) as part of the Unified State Plan;
- Authorize employment, education, and training programs provided by public libraries as additional one-stop partners; and
- Authorize the coordination of employment and training activities, and adult education and literacy activities, provided by public libraries as an Allowable Statewide Employment and Training Activity.