

# ALA American Library Association

October 11, 2022

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch  
Office of the Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

**In the Matter of:      Nomination for Universal Service Administrative Company  
Board of Directors**

**CC Docket Nos. 97-21, 96-45**

Dear Secretary Dortch,

The American Library Association (ALA) thanks Ms. Amber Gregory for her dedicated service as the library representative on the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) Board of Directors. Ms. Gregory is seeking reappointment to the Board and ALA enthusiastically nominates her to continue in her role in the library position. During her tenure at the Arkansas State Library, and her first term on the USAC Board of Directors, Ms. Gregory has developed the knowledge and experience necessary to represent the needs of libraries and to continue making significant contributions to the USAC Board.

As Manager of E-rate Services for the Arkansas State Library, Ms. Gregory works directly with library applicants throughout the E-rate application process. She is intimately familiar with the entire E-rate application process, helping to secure approximately \$1 million annually for Arkansas public libraries. This represents 130 eligible library locations and includes regional library systems as well as county and city library entities. Since Ms. Gregory became E-rate Manager, Arkansas libraries have increased the overall amount in funding requests and program participation increased from 47 percent to an average of 60 percent today. This is especially noteworthy given that Arkansas libraries are primarily small, rural and are less equipped to participate without significant support.

Ms. Gregory has a unique and critical local and national perspective of the E-rate program. Ms. Gregory conducts yearly regional trainings and provides one-on-one assistance throughout the application cycle on all the required forms and related actions. This experience has made her an invaluable member of the ALA E-rate Task Force since 2014. The E-rate Task Force is made up of state level E-rate and broadband experts. The task force is the primary ALA member group that advises the association on E-rate policy positions and related issues before the FCC and Congress

such as broadband mapping and rural broadband access. The current Chair and Vice-Chair, Paul Kissman and Lauren Abner, respectively, offer their endorsement of Ms. Gregory for this role:

" Amber Gregory's contributions to the E-rate community are highly valued, demonstrating superb knowledge of the E-rate program and issues that concern all types of library applicants, including small and rural libraries with the greatest need for support. She has ably represented the interests of library E-rate applicants during her first term and building on her experience will benefit both USAC and the larger E-rate community. The American Library Association's Task Force leadership fully supports her nomination for a 2<sup>nd</sup> term. "

Ms. Gregory has built a national reputation within the library community as a leader on E-rate, rural broadband, and digital inclusion issues and is being recognized outside of her home state. She has presented about broadband for libraries at the Association for Rural and Small Libraries and the American Library Association annual conferences. She was named a 2021 Library Journal Mover and Shaker for her work planning hands-on tech training to increase IT knowledge among rural and small libraries, which is often a barrier to E-Rate participation. During the pandemic, she supported library efforts to enhance student and community connectivity by promoting hot spot lending programs, such as those funded by the Emergency Connectivity Fund.

Ms. Gregory's ability to collaborate and high professional standards as well as her demonstrated innovative approaches to promoting learning, training, and leadership development will continue to serve the USAC Board and to E-rate applicants across the country. As the leading library association in the United States, ALA is confident that Ms. Gregory will continue to be a strong Board representative for libraries that are eligible to receive discounts. She has proven that she will provide the necessary leadership that ensures the integrity and continued success of the E-rate program in particular and the Universal Service Fund in general.

A copy of Ms. Gregory's professional biography is attached. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alan S. Inouye, Ph.D.  
Interim Associate Executive Director  
ALA Public Policy and Advocacy

Larra Clark, MSLIS  
Deputy Director  
ALA Public Policy and Advocacy

Megan Janicki  
Deputy Director  
ALA Public Policy and Advocacy