[Date]

Dear eLending partners:

We reach out to you as representatives of the Public Library Association (PLA), with the goal of advocacy for eLending improvements. As you know, eLending has grown significantly over the past decade, and is now firmly established as an important way that many library patrons access content. As we think about the decades to come, we want to encourage our partners in eLending capabilities that will cultivate a healthy, 21st century culture of reading.

Specifically, we are asking eLending content aggregators like you to work toward offering multiple lending models with each title, and showing them all in one place. Each title ideally will show:

* Metered-access option (sequential loans, lower price point)
* Perpetual use option (sequential loans, higher price point)
* Concurrent use option (concurrent loans, priced by individual loan)

Multiple lending models help libraries use technology to optimize their collection budgets according to the life cycle they anticipate for a book. Libraries will use perpetual use options for titles they want in their collections over the long term, and metered access for titles whose popularity and life cycle are unknown upon release. Concurrent use models may be used for very popular titles, or those for which there is an immediate information need (as with Black Lives Matter books in June 2020). They may also be used for community reading events. The ALA Joint Digital Content Working Group identified multiple models as a change that can benefit public libraries in its statement on ALA.org here [add link when published], and this letter to you is one effort to realize those changes.

Libraries are working with publishers too, encouraging them to offer multiple models at point of license. Many medium or smaller publishers are amenable, and one of the Big 5 is offering multiple models at least until June 30, 2021. We are hopeful that more publishers will work with us. These conversations will be fruitless, however, if the platforms we use for acquisitions do not support multiple models.

We know you may already support some of this, and we know that architecture investments are significant. But we ask that you look upon these changes as investments that improve your ability to compete in addition to assisting librarians. A flexible, easy-to-use interface for selection librarians that offers all options in one place will minimize time spent on searches and clicks. Librarians are book experts whose goal is to promote a wide array of resources to their residents and to cultivate reading and lifelong learning in those communities. An architecture that optimizes for their expertise is one that helps us all.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

[PLA leadership signatures?]