ALA Committee on Legislation
Report to Council
2020 Midwinter Meeting—Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Rob Banks Chair—ALA Committee on Legislation
January 28, 2020

Public Policy Highlights
As we begin 2020, the Committee on Legislation (COL) would like to pause and reflect on what we accomplished last year in the advocacy and policy realm.

2020 Fiscal Year Funding Campaigns
As you will remember—in 2019—ALA completed two budget cycles simultaneously and increased funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) by funding by $9 million for FY18 and $2 million in FY19. In FY20, we secured a $10 million dollar increase for IMLS in fiscal year 2020—including $6.2 million dollars for the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). That is the largest increase for the LSTA program in 12 years.

Confirmations
In addition to the budget successes, ALA worked to advocate for the nomination of Hugh Halpern as the director of the Government Publishing Office. And—on January 9, 2020—the U.S. Senate confirmed the nomination of ALA and PLA member R. Crosby Kemper III as director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Not only did we confirm Hugh and Crosby in a politically very intense time, ALA pushed this confirmation through in 58 and 51 days, respectively. A new report from the nonpartisan Partnership for Public Service shows that, on average, it takes the Senate 115 days to confirm a presidential appointee. ALA accomplished these two confirmations three times as fast, a statistic that speaks highly of the skill and know-how of the ALA team and our network of advocates across the country.

Census
Last year, we continued to build on our work with the U.S. Census Bureau to support ALA's awareness and education efforts about the 2020 Census, which will be primarily held online for the first time. In the days before Midwinter, ALA released the updated "Libraries' Guide to the 2020 Census." The 22-page "Guide" is a free resource to help library staff prepare for the 2020 Census. Originally released last year, the updated "Guide" reflects the latest information and resources for libraries. The "Guide," recorded webinars, and other resources are available on ALA's website: ala.org/census

In addition to the Guide, ALA also gave 59 libraries Library Census Equity Fund mini-grants of $2,000 to bolster their service to hard-to-count communities and help achieve a complete count in the 2020 Census. In the words of ALA President Wanda Brown: "The 2020 Census will determine how political representation and critical resources are distributed for the next ten years, and libraries are essential partners in making sure the data collected as part of the Census is complete and accurate. The efforts of these 59 libraries will shine a light on all the library workers across the country who are shouldering efforts

to reach and inform their communities—especially vulnerable and hard-to-count populations—about the importance of a full and inclusive count."

Committee on Legislation Activities
LSTA Task Force: The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Task Force continues to work diligently and collaboratively to build future funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Grants to States Program. The mission of the LSTA Task Force—a partnership between the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA), representatives from United for Libraries, the Urban Libraries Council, Chapters, and other interested parties such as American Indian Library Association— is to explore the short term goal of raising IMLS funds to fully fund the base allotment and to the reauthorized level.

COL introduces 2020 legislative agenda: COL has developed and approved a legislative agenda to strengthen and guide ALA's advocacy efforts through the second year of the 116th Congress, the full text of which is included as an addendum in this report. This agenda will annually highlight priorities for federal legislation, reflecting current opportunities with the greatest impact on libraries. The goals of the agenda are to raise issue awareness in the library community and to focus the work of the ALA staff.

COL reaches out to ALA divisions: COL members have, once again, reached out to the boards of each ALA division prior to Annual and offered to present information about the association's legislative activities and hear questions or suggestions from the divisions. COL members attended the meetings of the children and youth divisions, ASGCLA, ALCTS/LLAMA, PLA, and ACRL boards. COL will provide written information to the other division boards to engage them in discussions about how to engage with the association's policy advocacy.

COL considers future of Policy Corps: COL is continuing to work closely with the Policy Corps and looks forward to welcoming the third cohort in February. Going forward, COL will continue to discuss how the program can broaden ALA advocacy across the association.

COL encourages all ALA members to advocate for library priorities: Successful advocacy for library policy priorities relies on the active and continued engagement of ALA members as community leaders and policy advocates. COL encourages library professionals and supporters to join in the ongoing work of fostering relationships with policymakers in their communities. COL asks ALA members to consider inviting their members of Congress to visit a local library this spring to show them how the library is transforming your community. ALA's public policy and advocacy staff can advise ALA members on how to begin working with the staff in your congressional district office. You can also find resources on ALA's website: ala.org/advocacy/build-relationships

Joint Report from the Committee on Legislation, International Relations Committee, and the Intellectual Freedom Committee on Resolution in Defense of the Free Speech of Supporters of the Movement for Palestinian Rights 2018-2019: The "Resolution in Defense of the Free Speech of Supporters of the Movement for Palestinian Rights" was approved by a vote of 63-62 at the 2019 ALA Annual Conference Membership Meeting. It was presented to ALA Council, which voted to refer the resolution to COL, the Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC), and the International Relations Committee (IRC). In referring the resolution to the three committees, Council asked them to review the resolution and report back to ALA Council at ALA's 2020 Midwinter Meeting. The chairs of each committee formed

a task force that also included representatives from the Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) and a member of Council.

The task force, ably co-led by former IFC member and current Privacy Subcommittee member Eldon Ray James and IRC Chair Emily Drabinski, worked throughout the fall to produce a revised resolution and report for review by the three committees. While the task force was not able to produce a consensus document, it did produce a careful and detailed report that explained their process and decision-making as they produced a revised resolution. However, the documents did not have the support of every member of the task force.

The IFC reviewed the task force's report and revised resolution. After the deliberation and consulting with other ALA groups, the IFC voted not to support the resolution. The IRC voted 6-3 to advise Council of the majority committee opinion that the resolution relates to domestic policy and therefore is not in the purview of the IRC. The IRC brings no recommendation to Council.

COL's perspective is that this resolution from the lens of COL and the ALA Legislative Agenda. COL wants to thank Sara Dallas and Robert Barr for volunteering to serve. They took this responsibility seriously. A point of pride for them was that, even through passionate discussions, all members of the task force were respectful and professional. COL spent many hours discussing the feedback from Sara and Robert and listening to perspective on this issue. Because we believe that this resolution does not promote the ALA Legislative Agenda and has the potential to disrupt our efforts to pursue continued federal funding for libraries in this Congress, COL voted not to support the resolution.

The committee appreciates the work of the task force, and thanks them for the thoughtful conversations that occurred between ALA Annual Conference and this Midwinter Meeting.

Subcommittee Reports

Copyright
The Copyright Legislation, Education and Advocacy Network (CLEAN) subcommittee is focusing its efforts on copyright education for K-12 librarians. This effort will launch at Annual with a conference program Copyright and K-12 Librarians. Copyright tools developed over the years are being upgraded to work on modern browsers. Thousands of librarians and others have used the tools since their creation back in 2003-2005, available at librarycopyright.net. CLEAN is also drafting comments in response to the Notice of Inquiry from the U.S. Copyright Office on the meaning of "published" in the online environment. The Library Copyright Alliance, the copyright coalition consisting of the Public Policy and Advocacy Office, the Association of Research Libraries, and the Association of College and Research Libraries, will also provide a response.

Government Information
COL's Government Information Subcommittee met at ALA's 2020 Midwinter Meeting, jointly with the Government Documents Roundtable's (GODORT) Legislation Committee.

Members heard a guest presentation from Hugh Halpern, recently confirmed as Director of the Government Publishing Office (GPO), in his first public appearance since his confirmation. ALA, along with the American Association of Law Libraries and the Association of Research Libraries, endorsed his nomination in November, which was confirmed by the Senate in December. Director Halpern discussed his background, vision for GPO, and desire to collaborate with the library community and other stakeholders.

The subcommittee also heard a guest presentation from Meg Phillips, external affairs liaison for the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). Ms. Phillips addressed the recent incident where NARA used an altered image in marketing material for an exhibit. She noted that NARA understood why the library, archival, and museum communities expressed concern about the incident, which NARA has publicly apologized for. She added that NARA has responded directly to ALA's statement in a letter addressed to President Wanda Brown. She specified that no archival materials were altered in the incident, and that NARA would continue to review its procedures to ensure this does not happen again.

The subcommittee also discussed the status of the FDLP Modernization Act (pending reintroduction in Congress) and current efforts of the Depository Library Council and Preservation of Electronic Government Information (PEGI) Project. Finally, the subcommittee shared several current opportunities or resources:

- National Historical Publications & Records Commission grant opportunities (various deadlines)
- Civic Switchboard call for proposals (due February 17)
- GODORT Voting & Election Toolkits
- Arrange a Congressional Visit of Your Library
- 2020 Congressional calendar

Grassroots

COL Grassroots subcommittee met in person during ALA's 2020 Midwinter meeting. During their convening the group received a brief update regarding the eBooks advocacy initiative from ALA staff and discussed avenues for assisting with the efforts. The subcommittee was charged by the chair to begin the collection of patron stories which highlight how the eBook embargo has affected their usership experience. The subcommittee will send all relevant stories to ALA Public Policy staff. Next the subcommittee discussed efforts to help promote registration for the 2020 National Library Legislative Day (NLLD) as well as virtual participation in NLLD. The subcommittee was charged by the chair to commit to enrolling 5-10 advocates in virtual NLLD before the next check-in call in March. In addition, the subcommittee will be working on new advocacy tools to compliment NLLD programing. Lastly, subcommittee members recorded brief testimonial videos regarding why they are a library advocate. The testimonial videos will be used for NLLD promotion and other advocacy initiatives in 2020.

Committee on Library Advocacy

COL and COLA continue to work closely together. As ALA's Public Policy and Advocacy team has evolved and grown over the last year, a parallel shift to better align our committee has also been intentional—focused on the goal of better aligning our national, state, and local advocacy efforts. COLA met this Midwinter to discuss the soon-to-be launched Advocacy Academy, an ALA training which urges attendees to re-think advocacy: to re-define the library community and expand the way we have been advocating for libraries. Typically held as a pre-conference at state and regional conferences, Advocacy Academy will help library communities prepare to advocate for libraries as fundamental building blocks to democracy. We will explore some of the brutal facts about our current environment, celebrate our assets, and offer practical tips to reclaim a moral sanction for the work we do and the support our communities deserve.

COLA members completed a scan of state advocacy resources across state associations and is developing a resource that will connect best practices with exemplars. Their work will also inform improvements to ALA's state and local resources, similar to the work that Loida's advisory committee did for the federal resources. They discussed COLA's role in prioritizing and coordinating school library advocacy and will be addressing that in their next (virtual) meeting.

COLA also discussed the work ALA is doing to support the work of all types of libraries and partner organizations to increase voter engagement in all communities. Read more and find resources and ideas in ALA's Voter Engagement Guide.

Other topics discussed and areas of collaboration between COL and COLA include NLLD, the National Network, and the ALA legislative agenda, which COLA is helping to build and shape specifically to bolster ALA's legislative work that impacts state legislative advocacy.

American Library Association
Committee on Legislation
Legislative Agenda for 2020
January 28, 2020

Strategic, year-round, and relationship-focused advocacy is central to ALA's mission and essential to the future of America's libraries. ALA's Committee on Legislation encourages ALA members and library supporters to advocate on the following library priorities in 2020. ALA will monitor these and other federal issues that may affect libraries and respond with the support of our members and library advocates nationwide.

Funding
Equitable federal funding for library services is essential to ensuring that every community in America has strong libraries. We call on ALA members to join us in advocating on these key funding issues in 2020:

● Dedicated library programs: Continued funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the Department of Education's Innovative Approaches to Literacy program (IAL), the Library of Congress, the National Library of Medicine and the Federal Depository Library Program.
● Library-eligible programs: Continued and new federal program opportunities for which libraries are eligible recipients, such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.
● IMLS Director: Prompt confirmation of Crosby Kemper III, who has been nominated to serve as Director of IMLS and lead the agency's important work to support the nation's libraries. COMPLETED January 2020

Equitable Access to High-Speed Internet
Modern library services depend on high-speed internet. ALA supports policies to ensure that libraries in all parts of the country can serve their users with fast and affordable broadband and online services. We call on ALA members to join us in advocating on these key connectivity issues in 2020:

● E-rate: Continued funding for the E-rate program, reduced complexity in applying for E-rate and increased support for applicants from the Universal Service Administrative Company.
● Tribal broadband: Expanded opportunities for tribal libraries to receive support for high-speed Internet, such as by expanded eligibility for E-rate.
● Net neutrality: Restoration of net neutrality protections.

Copyright, Licensing, and Competition
Libraries rely on balanced and flexible copyright policy to enable vital library services. ALA supports a modern copyright system with effective user rights and limitations and exceptions to copyright that protect library services. Additionally, libraries rely on fair licenses and market practices in order to

provide access to digital content such as e-books. We call on ALA members to join us in advocating on these key copyright, licensing, and competition issues in 2020:

- E-books and digital content: Federal and state scrutiny of unfair and anti-competitive practices that limit libraries' ability to meet their users' reading and information needs.
- Copyright Office: Preserving the Librarian of the Congress' authority to manage and oversee the Copyright Office, and continued modernization of the Library's and Office's information infrastructure.

Government Information and Services

Libraries provide access to government information and services in communities across the country. ALA supports policies that assist libraries in providing no-fee permanent public access to government information and equitable access to government services. We call on ALA members to join us in advocating on these key government information issues in 2020:

- 2020 Census: Ensuring adequate information, outreach, and support to libraries as they help their communities achieve a complete count in the 2020 Census.
- Federal Depository Library Program: Modernizing the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP).

Emerging Policy Issues

Many policy issues affect the broad range of services that libraries provide to their communities. We call on ALA members to join us in exploring opportunities to support libraries through improved public policy related to these issues:

- STEM and coding: Develop new opportunities for libraries to engage their communities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and coding.
- Jobs and workforce development: Recognize and support workforce development services in libraries, including in reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).
- Small business development: Expand opportunities for libraries to support entrepreneurs and small businesses, especially from underserved communities.
- Library infrastructure and sustainability: Modernize America's library facilities to better serve their communities, save energy and resources, and improve sustainability.

Conclusion

The sustained engagement of ALA members and America's library supporters is essential to advancing positive policy outcomes on these key issues. We urge all ALA members to sign up as ALA advocates at ala.org/takeaction, to respond to action alerts and advocacy opportunities, to build relationships with their elected officials and community leaders, and to communicate the impact that libraries have in our communities.