**2017-2018 CD#30.1\_61518\_INF.**

 **2018 Annual Conference**

**ALA WASHINGTON OFFICE REPORT TO COUNCIL**

June 14, 2018

**WASHINGTON OFFICE NEWS**

**Washington Office welcomes NLLD 2018 attendees**

On May 7-8, the ALA Washington Office welcomed over 480 attendees to Washington, D.C. for the 44th annual [National Library Legislative Day](https://www.districtdispatch.org/2018/05/library-supporters-gear-up-for-year-round-advocacy/) (NLLD). This year, the Congressional Management Foundation (CMF) led a pre-NLLD webinar (“The Pre-Fly In Checklist”) in March to help prepare NLLD registrants for their time in Washington, D.C. and give them a sense of what to expect. In early April the Washington Office held another webinar led by new staff Megan Ortegon and Daniel Snedden, who used their experiences working on Capitol Hill to share tips and best practices with attendees. The Washington Office focused on increasing participation in Virtual Library Legislative Day (VLLD), the digital component of NLLD, through the efforts of Washington Office intern Katherine Dean, who did targeted outreach to public, school, academic and tribal libraries across the country, as well as students currently participating in MLS programs, to ensure that all libraries are being represented in advocacy throughout the week.

Among the 2018 NLLD attendees were advocates from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, who were joined by over 1,000 viewers participating virtually in the [livestreamed](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFYnmkKCNsY&t=175s) event. Nearly half of those participating were first-time NLLD attendees. In his introduction, ALA President Jim Neal focused on persistence in advocacy efforts over the long term, saying “The thing about advocacy is that it’s year-round. It’s about cultivating a relationship that earns the trust of lawmakers and wins victories, step by step over time.”

This year, participants were asked to focus on three strategic asks: ask members of Congress to fully fund federal library programs; reauthorize the Museum and Library Services Act; and visit a library to see broadband access in action. A smaller number of delegations in strategically critical states and congressional districts were also asked to advocate for the Marrakesh Treaty and the Tribal Connect Act (see “Federal Legislation,” below). The program included mock meetings, state delegation caucusing and panels of seasoned advocates from ALA’s Committee on Legislation and across the ALA community. Speakers included ALA President Jim Neal; Brad Fitch, CEO of the Congressional Management Foundation; and policy experts from around D.C. The event was also attended by several members of the Corporate Committee for Library Investment, including Steve Potash (OverDrive), Skip Dye (Penguin Random House) and Paul Gazzolo (Gale Cengage).

On Tuesday, advocates made their way to the Hill for more than 325 congressional meetings, while virtual attendees began calling and sending emails to their legislators. Since the event, the Museum and Library Services Act and the Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act (see “Federal Legislation,” below) have each gained three new cosponsors, respectively.

In the week that followed NLLD, attendees received an invitation to participate in a follow-up advocacy training webinar by the Congressional Management Foundation to equip ALA members to plan their own events as they begin to issue invitations for their elected officials to visit their library. The webinar addressed best practices related to inviting members of Congress to attend local events.

**ALA Policy Corps meets at MidWinter 2018, comes to Washington, D.C. for training, advocacy**

At the ALA Midwinter Meeting the ALA Policy Corps met for the first time to begin their training as the first cohort. ALA President Jim Neal led the discussion of the purpose and goals for the Policy Corps. In early March, the Policy Corps completed two days of intensive training in Washington, D.C. The focus of this workshop included behind-the-scenes looks of policymaking on net neutrality, E-rate and federal funding for libraries, as well as meeting with ALA’s key partners in Washington, attending the James Madison Award ceremony at the Newseum and discussing public access to government information. Even though Corps members are in training, some of them have already made their mark in policy advocacy; for example, one Corps member had her [letter to the editor](https://www.peninsuladailynews.com/letters/letter-thanks-murray-kilmer-for-library-funding-support/) about federal funding for libraries published in her local newspaper. The cohort also participated in National Library Legislative Day and a follow-on training workshop on communications. The training featured sessions on public presentations and media outreach. The Corps also met with the Working Group that oversees the ALA Policy Corps for a check-in on the initiative.

**Libraries Ready to Code prepares to release beta collection of resources**

During ALA’s Midwinter conference, the libraries that received funding in the latest phase of ALA’s Ready to Code initiative participated in a design workshop to further develop the toolkit and associated materials that will be made broadly available to any library in the fall of 2018. The project team is working with ALA’s youth divisions to solicit feedback and input on a rollout process. In addition to the workshop, Ready to Code libraries participated in two other public programs as panelists and in a workshop by the National Center for Women in Information Technology (NCWIT). The workshop is a continuation of the ALA-NCWIT partnership and focused on addressing implicit bias and increasing diversity in coding and CS programs for youth. NCWIT created a curated collection of resources for libraries that was made available to workshop participants and will be widely available on the NCWIT website. The NCWIT Aspirations program continues to build out its library engagement and actively recruited library partners for its spring and summer [AspireIT](https://www.ncwit.org/project/aspireit-k-12-outreach-program) program. Libraries in Alaska, Maine, Georgia, Florida and Idaho will have programs in this round.

The Ready to Code (RtC) cohort is releasing the beta version of ALA’s Libraries Ready to Code Collection at Annual. RtC cohort libraries, working in small groups, are reviewing and tagging resources from lesson plans to program assessments to websites, analog games and technology-based coding programs. Cohort members have also been working with the RtC team to develop library personas and strategy briefs, all of which will be available for beta testing at the RtC/Google exhibit at Annual. The RtC team is preparing a feedback survey for input from the wider library community after Annual. Cohort members started sharing information about their projects on the [District Dispatch](https://www.districtdispatch.org/?s=ready+to+code), with one post each week through Annual.

**ALA’s Committee on Legislation adopts two resolutions at Midwinter 2018**

At the 2018 Midwinter conference, the ALA Committee on Legislation endorsed two resolutions which were submitted and subsequently approved by the ALA Council. The first resolution, which commemorates the 20th anniversary of the federal E-rate program, was endorsed jointly with ALA’s E-rate Task Force. A second resolution, recommended by the COL’s Government Information Subcommittee and GODORT's Legislation Committee, was issued in honor of Davita Vance-Cooks, the 27th Public Printer of the United States and Director of the Government Publishing Office.

**WO program director advocates for open access on Colorado State University panel**

Carrie Russell, Director of ALA’s Program on Public Access to Information, served as a panelist on a webinar for the Colorado State University’s staff development session, “SciHub, Open Access pirates, and you: Librarians on the high seas,” on February 14. Russell explained that, in addition to working with organizations like the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions and Electronic Information for Libraries, supporting and promoting open access will provide the insight and perspective needed to support global information equity.

**WO presents 2018 Madison and Cooke Awards**

On March 9, ALA [announced](http://www.districtdispatch.org/2018/03/2018-madison-cooke-awardees/) U.S. Representatives Darrell Issa (R-CA) and Mike Quigley (D-IL) as recipients of the 2018 James Madison Award in a Sunshine Week preview event at the Newseum’s Knight TV Studio in Washington, D.C., which included video remarks by both awardees. ALA President Jim Neal also presented the Eileen Cooke Award to Florida’s First Amendment Foundation, an honor that garnered mention in an [editorial](http://www.orlandosentinel.com/opinion/os-ed-sunshine-week-protect-florida-constitution-20180314-story.html) by the Orlando Sentinel in praise of open government. Both the Madison and Cooke Awards honor individuals or organizations who have championed, protected and promoted public access to government information and the public’s right to know how it functions. In response to feedback regarding the 2018 James Madison Award, ALA issued an [update](http://www.districtdispatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/this-update.pdf) to document the source and original intent of the Madison Award and to clarify the steps making future awards.

**WO welcomes cohort of students for Spring break**

In March, a new cohort of three University of Michigan students joined the WO for a week-long [internship](http://www.districtdispatch.org/2018/02/alternative-spring-break-students/) in D.C. as part of the University’s School of Information “Alternative Spring Break” program. For several years the WO has participated in the program, which provides an opportunity for students to engage in a service-oriented integrative learning experience; connects public sector organizations to the knowledge and abilities of students; and facilitates relationships between the School and the greater library community. The internship included tours and visits to important libraries, including at the Department of Commerce Research, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and several local universities. In addition to research projects, the interns’ field visits made significant contributions to the WO’s photo library.

WASHINGTON OFFICE ADVOCACY OUTREACH

**National Library Week events on Capitol Hill inspire congressional partnership on broadband**

For the 2018 National Library Week, the WO and ALA President Jim Neal hosted [events](https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/making-space-for-libraries-on-capitol-hill-during-national-library-week/) to showcase the role of libraries in providing internet connectivity and advancing the new workforce through innovation and entrepreneurship. An afternoon [reception](http://www.districtdispatch.org/2018/04/library-makerspaces-on-capitol-hill/) co-hosted with Rep. Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM-3) in Longworth House Office Building on Wednesday, April 11, highlighted how libraries are advancing the maker economy and featured librarians and technology from the D.C. Public Library’s Fabrication Lab. Rep. Lujan reinforced his support for libraries and their value in providing connectivity (see [Tribal Connect Act](https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/tribal-connect-act-bringing-broadband-tribal-lands/) below).

On Thursday, April 12, the WO co-hosted a luncheon [panel](http://www.districtdispatch.org/2018/04/ala-spotlights-broadband-in-tribal-and-rural-libraries/) at the Capitol Visitors Center with Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM) focusing on internet connectivity in Tribal libraries and rural communities. Moderated by ALA Spectrum Scholar Elayne Silversmith, branch librarian from the National Museum of the American Indian’s Cultural Resources Center, the panel “Broadband Connectivity in Tribal and Rural Communities,” featured librarians and telecommunications experts from across the country, including Cynthia Aguilar, a librarian with Santo Domingo Pueblo in New Mexico; Hannah Buckland, director of Library Services at Leech Lake Tribal College in Minnesota and a member of the ALA Policy Corps; Irene Flannery, director of AMERIND Critical Infrastructure. The panel discussed the Tribal Connect Act (see below). There also was a [simultaneous #critlib Twitter chat](http://critlib.org/twitter-chats/upcoming-twitter-chats/) during the panel to encourage participation virtually. Remarks from outgoing Federal Communications Commissioner Mignon Clyburn inspired the audience.

Also on April 12, WO staff represented ALA at the Congressional App Challenge’s annual [#HouseOfCode Demo Day](http://www.congressionalappchallenge.us/news/2017-coming-houseofcode-demo-day/), the largest celebration of student computer science achievement on Capitol Hill. In a reception on Capitol Hill, students who participated in the 2017 **Congressional App Challenge** demonstrated to lawmakers the apps they developed to win their congressional district’s coding contest. The WO has been a strong supporter of the App Challenge as a way to promote computer science education and library advocacy.

**WO, PLA continue preparations for U.S. Census 2020**

The 2020 Census will be the first decennial census to provide an online response option, and this new e-government option may bring large numbers of users into libraries to complete their census questionnaire. WO staff are [collaborating](https://www.districtdispatch.org/2018/04/gearing-up-2020-census/) with Census Bureau staff, Census stakeholders and library leaders to ensure libraries are informed about the 2020 Census and can plan for potential demands. PLA and the OITP Advisory Committee will co-convene a 2020 Census Library Outreach and Education Task Force to advise ALA’s efforts, with a target first meeting at Annual 2018. The Census Bureau will also host an exhibit booth at Annual 2018 as a form of outreach to libraries. ALA is in discussions with the Georgetown Center on Poverty and Inequality about a potential collaboration to produce information [resources](https://civilrights.org/new-report-highlights-opportunities-risks-first-high-tech-census/) about the 2020 Census for library audiences and include library perspectives in future Census reports. ALA has also talked with the City University of New York’s Center for Urban Research about including library locations in their [mapping services](https://www.censushardtocountmaps2020.us/) related to the 2020 Census. COL chair Kent Oliver is scheduled to represent libraries on a panel about the 2020 Census at the National Association of Counties’ [conference](http://www.naco.org/events/nacos-83rd-annual-conference-exposition) in July. ALA leaders also are scheduled to meet with Department of Commerce and Census Bureau leaders in June to discuss library outreach and engagement.

**ALA Honors FCC Commissioner Clyburn**

The public interest community in D.C. held an event to honor retiring FCC Commissioner Mignon Clyburn. ALA co-hosted the [event](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/where-do-we-go-from-here-words-from-the-conscience-of-the-fcc-tickets-45598015893) with such notable coalition partners as Common Cause and the National Hispanic Media Coalition. Clyburn gave a rousing [address](https://twitter.com/AlanSInouye/status/994375332680564736) about broadband as the technology of opportunity, emphasizing that no community should be left behind. Several [members](https://twitter.com/AlanSInouye/status/994378613037457408) of the ALA Policy Corps were able to attend.

**Policy Director Discusses Federal Libraries at FEDLINK Event**

Public Policy Director Dr. Alan Inouye presented at the [FEDLINK](https://twitter.com/AlanSInouye/status/991769258454634497) Spring Exposition at the Library of Congress. On a panel focused on the future of federal libraries, Inouye focused his remarks on promoting awareness of the library and its resources and accomplishments within the agency and beyond. Also on the panel were Teri DeVoe of IMLS and FCC Library Director Amanda Costigan.

**Director of Program on Public Access to Information speaks at copyright conference**

On June 6, Carrie Russell, director of ALA’s Program on Public Access to Information, provided the closing keynote remarks at the [Kraemer Copyright Conference](https://www.uccs.edu/copyright/) at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. Her address focused on how the policy process works, with the Marrakesh Treaty serving as a case study.

**Washington Office staff visit libraries in the field**

In keeping with the WO’s three-year plan, WO staff have continued to invest time in the field. During ALA’s Midwinter conference, staff toured the Denver Public Library, with particular attention to the staff of their central library makerspace, the “Idea Lab.” Later in February, several staff visited the U.S. Census Bureau library in Suitland, Md., and learned more about their physical and digital holdings. During the Public Library Association (PLA) conference in Philadelphia in March, staff took the opportunity to tour the Philadelphia Free Library. Associate Executive Director Kathi Kromer also traveled to Nashville for the Tennessee Library Association’s Library Legislative Day, where she delivered the keynote address, “The Pulse of National and Local Library issues,” and toured the Nashville Public Library with Library Director and ALA Committee on Legislation Chair Kent Oliver. In March, Public Policy Director Alan Inouye joined Kromer for a visit to Rhode Island, where they met with incoming ALA Executive Board member Ed Garcia, Rhode Island Library Association President Kieran Ayton, ALA Chapter Council member Jack Martin and Senator Jack Reed for a series of events and tours of libraries in Providence and Cranston. In May, Kromer delivered the keynote address for the Alexandria (Va.) Public Library’s annual staff retreat and professional development day. Her presentation, “The Pulse of National & Local Library Issues,” highlighted the connections between advocacy and federal, state and local issues. Kromer also attended the Council of State Archivists’ Annual Partner Briefing at the National Archives and Records Administration building, where she gave an update on ALA’s policy priorities and heard from our archivist and museum partners.

Other WO staff made several visits to local libraries. WO Asst. Director of Public Policy Marike Visser, along with Shawnda Hines and Emily Wagner on the Communications team, observed a local Libraries Ready to Code program focusing on preschool children and their families at the Francis Gregory Library in Southeast Washington, D.C. During National Library Week, Grassroots Communications Specialist Lisa Lindle accompanied WO’s spring intern to the Smithsonian Libraries’ open house, where they met with an assortment of practitioners in the field. During National School Library Month, Emily Wagner worked with the American Association of School Librarians and Sylvia Norton to highlight Jason Reynolds’ speaking engagement with DC Public Schools library. Emily live-tweeted his talk at the Columbia Heights Educational Center in Northwest D.C.

**Washington Office hosts library delegations**

In March the WO hosted the annual meeting of the Beta Phi Mu Iota Chapter National Library Honors Society annual meeting. Information service specialist Abigail Ellsworth Ross, principal of RoFinCo, LLC, gave the keynote speech, “How Not to be Replaced by a Robot.” Later in the month, the WO welcomed for a second time Catholic University Associate Professor and University Pre-Law Advisor Dr. Renate Chancellor’s “Libraries and Information in Society” class.

The WO also hosted a lunch with the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), whose new Executive Director Mary Lee Kennedy was appointed in April 2018. Kennedy’s shared her plans to build on ARL's strengths as a leader and partner in the research and learning ecosystem and as a culture that embraces innovation, diversity and inclusion.

The WO has continued its support for the D.C. library community, hosting the citywide Friends of the DC Public Library for their bimonthly meeting, which included discussion of local advocacy efforts. In addition, the DC Library Association organized a briefing, “What's New in Copyright?” with John Saint Amour of the U.S. Copyright Office, also held in the WO space. In early June, the WO hosted DCLA, DCPL and LC GLOBE, the Library of Congress LGBTQ+ Employee Organization, ahead of Washington’s annual Pride Parade on Saturday, June 9. Librarians representing the LGBTQ+ community gathered at ALA ‘s office in Dupont Circle, where the parade began, for poster-making and light refreshments.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION AND POLICY UPDATES

**FEDERAL LIBRARY FUNDING AND PROGRAMS**

**Omnibus spending bill includes significant increases in funding for libraries**

The [FY 2018 omnibus spending bill](https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/FY18-OMNI-LABOR-HHS-SUM.pdf) passed by Congress and signed by the President on March 23 included significant increases for several library priority programs. Highlights of the spending bill include a $9 million increase for the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a level $27 million for Innovative Approaches to Literacy, a $22.1 million increase for the National Library of Medicine and a $700 million increase for Title IV, which will open new doors for school library funding. (A full chart of federal programs tracked by WO staff is [here](http://www.districtdispatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/FY2018-library-appropriations-snapshot.xlsx).) ALA’s campaign to save federal funding for libraries proved to be a tremendous success and put library programs on a solid footing as Congress begins the FY 2019 appropriations cycle. In addition to the funding increases, the spending package included a provision requiring public access to Congressional Research Service reports, something ALA has been advocating for some time (see Government Information, below).

**ALA members gather signatures for FY 2019 Dear Appropriator letters**

The House and Senate Dear Appropriator Letter campaigns were again successful as thousands of library advocates responded to ALA’s [calls to action](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/fund-libraries) and emailed, called or visited their representatives to urge their support for the LSTA and IAL Dear Appropriator letters. The FY 2019 LSTA Dear Appropriator letter in the House, led by Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ), called on Congress to provide at least $187 million for LSTA. This year, WO staff worked closely with state chapters and associations, generating over 45 letters to representatives from 15 state chapters, including Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Washington, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. We also generated letters from COSLA, AILA and ATALM and worked with United for Libraries to activate Friends groups.

The LSTA letter was signed by 136 representatives (the second most ever), a solid result for only 10 days of campaigning; normally, there is a three- to four-week window to gather signatures. Four members submitted their own individual LSTA letter: Bustos (D-IL-17), Cardenas (D-CA-29), Lance (R-NJ-7) and Jenkins (R-KS-2). Several new members added signatures to the LSTA letter, and the number of Republicans on the letter rose from three to four. Taking into account two resignations, one death and committee shifts in the House, the number of LSTA signatories is the same as last year.

The FY 2019 IAL Dear Appropriator Letter in the House was again led by four representatives: Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX), Rep. Don Young (R-AK), Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA) and Rep. Tom MacArthur (R-NJ). The final count for the IAL letter was lower than last year, with 98 signatures compared to 146. ALA advocated for IAL alongside a large coalition of education partners, so the drop is not due to inactivity on the part of ALA advocates or allies. There is some sense that the focus of school programs and school libraries has shifted to the Title IV program, authorized under the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act. The $700 million increase in Title IV funding in FY 2018 may be evidence of this shift. WO staff, alongside colleagues at AASL, will continue to monitor the program and investigate potential changes in our policy advocacy.

The successful FY 2019 Dear Appropriator [campaign](https://www.districtdispatch.org/2018/04/record-number-of-signatures-in-the-senate/) continued in the U.S. Senate following weeks of calls and emails by ALA members throughout April. The end result of this year’s Senate campaign was a [letter](https://districtdispatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Reed-Collins-FY19-Library-Services-and-Technology-Act-Request-Letter-FINAL.pdf) in support of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) led by Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Susan Collins (R-ME) and signed by 46 senators. A similar [letter](https://districtdispatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Reed-Innovative-Approaches-to-Literacy-FINAL.pdf) in support of the Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) program was led by Senators Jack Reed and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and signed by 35 Senators.

Also in April, ALA submitted [comments](https://districtdispatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/FY-2019-ALA-Written-Testimony-for-the-Record-Final.pdf) to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health, Human Services, Education Subcommittee and Related Agencies in support of funding for LSTA and IAL (Senate comments are due early June). Following the passage of the [FY 2018 omnibus spending package](https://www.districtdispatch.org/2018/03/big-federal-funding-increases-for-libraries/) with increases for many library programs and level funding for other programs, the White House submitted a [rescission package](https://www.districtdispatch.org/2018/04/rescission/) calling for cuts to many programs, though none directly affecting library funding. The rescission package is unlikely to pass, though the administration may suggest additional programs to cut in the future.

In addition to individual meetings with members of Congress and their staffs, WO staff also worked with coalition partners throughout the spring to advocate for federal funding. ALA participated in a broad education (more than 100 education groups) funding event in April that included the release of a response to the president’s FY 2019 budget issued by the education community. ALA helped plan the release of the budget book, a compendium of major education programs, which included two chapters written by ALA in support of LSTA and IAL. WO staff also served as section editor for lifelong learning programs.

**ALA continues to press for reauthorization of the Museum and Library Services Act (**[S.2271](https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/2271?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22museum+and+library+services+act+of+2017%22%5D%7D&r=1))

The WO continues to work with members to gain cosponsors for the Museum and Library Services Act (MLSA), introduced in December 2017 by Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) along with Senators Collins (R-ME), Cochran (R-MS), Gillibrand (D-NY) and Murkowski (R-AK). The legislation would reauthorize IMLS, including improvements such as expanding program access for Tribal libraries and allowing grant funds to be used for disaster preparation and response. ALA has focused efforts on gaining support of members of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. As of June 13, the bill has 18 cosponsors. WO staff continue to work with Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) on a House companion to Senator Reed’s bill. With support from ALA, Rep. Grijalva is currently soliciting Republicans to join the bill as original cosponsors to the bill.

**WO promotes application for federal Innovative Approaches to Literacy grants**

ALA [notified](https://www.districtdispatch.org/2018/04/school-library-literacy-grants-available/) members of the availability of IAL Grants. The program provides $27 million in federal funding to support the improvement of literacy skills for youth in high-need schools and communities. At least half of all IAL grants are reserved for the development and improvement of effective school library programs. Of note this year, the Department of Education placed a priority on funding proposals that meet specific priorities, especially those promoting STEM education.

**COPYRIGHT POLICY**

**Marrakesh Treaty proceeds to the full Senate**

On May 23, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted unanimously to support the Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act ([S. 2559](https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/2559/)). A full Senate vote requires a two-thirds majority vote before going to the president for signature. The international copyright treaty provides a copyright exception—the first ever in an international treaty—for libraries as authorized entities to make copies of entire articles and books accessible for people with print disabilities and distribute those copies across borders. If the Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act is passed and signed by the president, the bill will greatly increase access for English speakers with print disabilities, particularly in developing countries, where less than 1% of all published print content is accessible. The U.S. will benefit as well by being able to obtain foreign-language content, especially for Spanish speakers with print disabilities.

**WO leads efforts to oppose the newly-introduced CLASSICS Act**

Since its introduction in the House ([H.R.3301](https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/3301/text?format=txt)) in March and in the Senate ([S.2393](https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/2393)) in February, WO’s copyright subcommittee and staff have led efforts to oppose the Compensating Legacy Artists for their Songs, Service, & Important Contributions to Society (CLASSICS Act). In collaboration with the Music Library Association, the Historical Coalition for Access and Preservation and other allies, WO developed a strategy and coordinated lobbying efforts to revise the proposed legislation in two ways. The first recommendation is that Congress include the public performance exception (Section 110) to clarify that libraries and educational institutions have a right to stream music for educational purposes. The second recommended revision to the CLASSICS Act is to shorten the proposed copyright term for sound recordings. The pending legislation sets copyright term for all pre-1972 sound recordings to 2067. The Library Copyright Alliance, of which ALA is a founding member, and our allies argue for a rolling copyright term, 95 years from the point of fixation (e.g., placing a 1924 sound recording in the public domain in 2019 instead of 2067).

**WO supports alternative music legislation**

On May 23rd, Senator Wyden introduced the Accessibility for Curators, Creators, Educators, Scholars, and Society Recordings (ACCESS) Act as an alternative to the CLASSICS Act [(S. 2393)](https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/2393). The ACCESS Act also deals with the copyright status of pre-1972 sound recordings. It would provide full copyright protection to pre-1972 sound recordings that are currently protected by state law. ACCESS is preferred because with full federalization also comes all exceptions and limitations of copyright law. Preservation is a growing concern for archivists and music librarians who hold large collections of rare and one-of-a-kind collections in their libraries. ACCESS would allow library and archival preservation of sound recordings. It would also reduce the term of copyright to 95 years after publication, a term more in line with the rest of the copyright law and significantly better than a public domain until the year 2067 proposed in the CLASSICS Act. In addition to the WO and the Library Copyright Alliance, who issued a statement endorsing the [legislation](http://www.librarycopyrightalliance.org/storage/documents/ACCESStorecordingsPR_CH.pdf), numerous other copyright advocates support the bills, including R Street, Public Knowledge, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, the Internet Archive and the Music Library Association. Hill meetings are scheduled for the next two weeks.

**WO staff, Re:create coalition meet with Acting U.S. Register of Copyrights**

WO staff joined with other members of the [Re:create Coalition](http://www.recreatecoalition.org/) in a meeting with Acting U.S. Register of Copyrights Karyn Temple Claggett, who provided an update on the five-year plan to dramatically update the technologies and digital infrastructure of the Copyright Office, which is part of the Library of Congress. Working collaboratively with Dr. Carla Hayden and the Library’s IT personnel, the Copyright Office will provide input and expertise necessary to digitize their operations. Claggett expressed a willingness to work with Re:create and reiterated that the Copyright Act should address the needs of both rights holders and users of information. ALA is a founding member of the Re:create coalition, which includes industry trade associations, creators and fans, civil society groups and libraries committed to promoting balanced copyright law.

**WO gathers evidence to support new copyright exemption for people with hearing disabilities**

For the third round of comments on 1201 rulemaking his year, ALA as part of the Library Copyright Alliance ([LCA](http://www.librarycopyrightalliance.org/)) joined the University of Colorado’s [Samuelson-Glushko Technology Law and Policy Clinic](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cainouye%5CDownloads%5CApr18%20compilation.docx) on a new [request](http://www.librarycopyrightalliance.org/storage/documents/2018.03.14_Reply_Comment_Disability_Services_ATSP_ARL_ALA_ACRL_AHEAD.pdf) to the Copyright Office on circumventing technologies on DVDs and Blu-Ray discs to enable closed captioning for people with hearing difficulties. In February, the motion picture industry filed [comments](https://www.copyright.gov/1201/2018/comments-021218/) in opposition to the exemption, arguing that the exemption was not necessary because nearly all DVDs included captions. WO staff, along with colleagues from the Association of College & Research Libraries, reached out to media librarians and asked them to identify works without captioning and received numerous titles as evidence. A librarian from Emory University conducted a search of their collection and reported that only 9,000 DVDs out of 28,000 titles included captioning, demonstrating that the motion picture industry’s argument was incorrect.

**CopyTalk webinar series marks fifth anniversary**

The monthly [CopyTalk](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/pp/pub/copytalk) webinar series established by the OITP copyright education subcommittee has entered its fifth year, presenting copyright issues of importance to members. The February and March 2018 webinars focused on learnings from copyright and scholarly communication librarians and undergraduate copyright course respectively. As recent webinars have exceeded capacity, organizers are exploring new technology to expand participation and provide accessibility for people with hearing disabilities.

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY AND PROGRAMS**

**Net neutrality advocacy continues on multiple fronts**

ALA members and net neutrality allies continue to increase pressure to reinstate net neutrality protections that were gutted by a December 2017 Federal Communications Commission (FCC) vote. On May 15, ALA led a [press call](https://mailtrack.io/trace/link/5a4e2a2312a52d310658db47f71d7a1599d4f878?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.edsurge.com%2Fnews%2F2018-05-14-schools-can-t-police-providers-education-leaders-call-for-restoration-of-net-neutrality-rules&userId=1193701&signature=b9cb5ee4e6a94dc6) focusing on the importance of net neutrality for libraries, educational institutions and rural communities. On May 16, the Senate [voted](https://mailtrack.io/trace/link/a917497d6f8a5da3fd15e236ea1653744cc84314?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.districtdispatch.org%2F2018%2F05%2Fsenate-to-vote-today-to-attempt-to-save-net-neutrality%2F&userId=1193701&signature=127d08064ceae3e1) 52-47 to pass legislation under the Congressional Review Act (CRA) to block the FCC’s December 2017 rollback of net neutrality rules. With the passage of the CRA in the Senate, action moves to the House, which must also vote on the CRA. An ALA [action alert](https://mailtrack.io/trace/link/1988a3f4ebb78d0ed15303e023e1839222fd702b?url=http%3A%2F%2Fcqrcengage.com%2Fala%2Fapp%2Fwrite-a-letter%3F0%26engagementId%3D443593&userId=1193701&signature=a5fa909e7d433cc9) has generated more than 5,400 emails through the legislative action center since mid-December. The December 2017 Order [took effect](https://www.districtdispatch.org/2018/06/not-quite-the-end-of-net-neutrality/)June 11. ALA is joining allies in a net neutrality day of advocacy on June 26 and will be using social media at the 2018 Annual Conference to encourage members to contact their representative in the House to support the CRA. ALA will be working with other library and higher education groups to file an amicus brief this fall in support of the legal challenge to the FCC’s order.

**ALA co-sponsored E-rate Summit and Celebration on Capitol Hill**

In January, Washington Office staff [joined](http://www.districtdispatch.org/2018/01/transformative-effects-e-rate/) education groups and other long-time advocates to commemorate the twentieth year of the implementation E-rate program. Hosted by National Coalition for Technology in Education and Training (NCTET), the event brought together E-rate champions Senators Edward J. Markey (D-MA) and John D. Rockefeller, who lauded the success of the bipartisan program in connecting libraries and schools to the internet. Following their remarks, Lauren Abner of the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives shared how the E-rate program has benefitted Kentucky libraries and the communities they serve. Abner joined a panel that included other representatives from the public and private schools as well as Larry Irving, who is known as the originator of the term “digital divide.” FCC Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel gave closing remarks. Following the panel session was an evening event attended by three of the five FCC commissioners as well as other E-rate dignitaries and champions.

**WO meets with key staff at the FCC on E-rate and internet access for Tribal libraries**

In preparation for anticipated work by the FCC on the E-rate program, WO staff met with the Wireline Competition Bureau team that manages the E-rate program at the FCC to discuss ALA priorities related to the open proceeding on the program’s Category Two process. WO staff raised concerns from ALA’s E-rate task force and the state E-rate coordinators regarding the annual training provided by Universal Service Administrative Company and approved by the FCC. Staff also met with the new Chief of the Office of Native Affairs and Policy and other Bureau staff to talk about their priorities related to broadband access for Native communities and discuss issues for Tribal libraries and participation in the E-rate program.

**ALA welcomes introduction of House bill to improve broadband access for Tribal libraries**

Within two weeks of the National Library Week events on Capitol Hill, our reception co-host Rep. Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM-3) joined with Rep. Markwayne Mullin (R-OK-2) to introduce the Tribal Connect Act (H.R. 5661), the House companion bill to the legislation (S. 2205) [introduced](https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/tribal-connect-act-bringing-broadband-tribal-lands/) by Senators Martin Heinrich (D-NM) and Dean Heller (R-NV) in December 2017. ALA President Jim Neal was quoted in the [press release](https://lujan.house.gov/press-releases/lujan-mullin-introduce-bipartisan-legislation-to-improve-broadband-access-for-tribal-communities/) issued by the two Representatives upon introduction of the bill on April 27. WO staff worked closely with congressional staff in drafting the bill. Like the Senate bill, the Tribal Connect Act in the House would increase access to E-rate by opening eligibility to Tribal libraries who may not currently qualify, establish an E-rate pilot program for tribal anchor institutions where no library currently exists and direct the FCC to provide additional training and performance goals for tribal broadband access. Both bills have been referred to a committee in their respective chambers, the House Energy and Commerce Committee and the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, and ALA will be working with targeted members to secure their support for the legislation.

Delegations from target states met with their members of Congress during National Library Legislative Day (NLLD) to discuss the Tribal Connect Act and seek additional cosponsors for the bill. The current strategy is a focus on Republican members of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, which is considering the Senate version of the bill ([S. 2205](https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/2205)), and of the House Communications and Technology Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee, which is considering the companion legislation in the House ([H.R. 5661](https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/5661)). There are now three cosponsors for the Senate version and five for the House bill. WO staff continue outreach to target congressional offices and are connecting with the state libraries for continued grasstops advocacy efforts to secure local library support.

**Federal USAC solicits ALA input on improving E-rate program training**

Marijke Visser attended an invitation-only meeting with the new CEO and several staff of the federal Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), the organization that implements and oversees the FCC’s E-rate program, to discuss their applicant training and outreach workshops. State E-rate coordinators from Montana, Ohio, and Arkansas as well as the library representative on the USAC Board attended by phone. The CEO also held a smaller gathering to discuss future directions and stakeholder priorities for the next few months and through 2019. Marijke attended on behalf of libraries. As part of our ongoing E-rate advocacy with the FCC and USAC, we submitted a letter detailing issues with the yearly training workshops held by USAC. Suggestions from ALA’s E-rate task force included having a beginner track as well as focusing on the needs of the state E-rate coordinators who require more in-depth information than attendees who are new to the program.  We look forward to continuing to provide input to the FCC and USAC on their training and outreach activities to ensure library applicants have the information and resources they need to submit successful applications.

**ALA successfully advocates for E-rate applicants denied eligibility for faulty FCC form**

Thanks to the advocacy of ALA and others, in May the FCC directed USAC not to reject E-rate requests FY 2018 because of discrepancies caused by con­fusion over USAC changes to its online menu for submitting a form for competitive service bids. ALA had submitted a letter to the FCC in March recommending that the FCC instruct USAC not to issue any funding denials based on the Form 470 drop-down option that applicants selected. In addition, ALA strongly suggested that USAC correct the Form 470 drop down options before the July 1, 2018, start of filing the Form 470 for the 2019 program year. Senior Policy Advocate Marijke Visser was quoted in Washington Communications Daily: “The additional directive for FY 2019 will prevent further confusion and ensure fair consideration for every library that invests time and energy into the E-rate application process.”

**FCC calls out librarians as adult digital literacy trainers**

As part of the FCC’s ongoing effort to encourage digital literacy among older adults, FCC consumer relations staff is working with the Washington Office to connect with ALA members conducting older adult digital literacy programs. ALA is identified as an outreach collaborator on the [website](https://www.fcc.gov/news-events/blog/2018/05/24/older-americans-and-broadband-getting-connected) for the new campaign, *Older Americans and Broadband: Get Connected.* FCC consumer relations staff will attend Annual conference and confer with a group of librarians to learn more about older adult services and identify best practices and then publicize older adult digital literacy programs offered at public libraries across the country.

**GOVERNMENT INFORMATION POLICY**

**ALA continues advocacy for modernizing Federal Depository Library Program**

On April 12, the Committee on House Administration [approved](http://www.districtdispatch.org/2018/04/house-committee-approves-fdlp-modernization-act/) the bipartisan FDLP Modernization Act of 2018 ([H.R. 5305](http://www.districtdispatch.org/2018/03/long-awaited-fdlp-modernization-act-strengthen-public-access-government-information/)). The bill is cosponsored by all the members of that committee, led by Chairman Gregg Harper (R-MS) and Ranking Member Bob Brady (D-PA), who are both retiring from Congress after this year. The bill would modernize the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) to improve public access to government information. The bill was developed with input from the library community following a series of [public hearings](http://www.districtdispatch.org/2017/09/20-years-house-hearing-focuses-depository-libraries/) in 2017 which included testimony from librarians, and it incorporates many of the [recommendations](http://www.districtdispatch.org/2017/09/dear-congress-heres-ensure-public-access-government-information/) ALA sent to the committee. The committee noted the support of ALA and other library associations at the markup. The committee is expected to issue a report accompanying the bill in early June. The bill has also been referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. ALA and other stakeholders are advocating for that committee to approve or discharge the bill so that it can proceed to the House floor.

**ALA welcomes new law providing public access to Congressional Research Service Reports**

The Consolidated Appropriations Act signed by the president in March included a provision to provide public access to reports by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). ALA has long advocated for public access to CRS reports, dating back to a Council resolution adopted in 1998. CRS is a federal agency, housed within the Library of Congress, that prepares public policy research for members of Congress, including nonconfidential reports about a range of policy topics. These reports have not been routinely published, but the new provision now requires the Library to establish a website to provide free, online public access to the reports. The new legislation will enable libraries to provide their users with free, authentic copies of these useful public policy reports.