

**ALA Committee on Legislation  
Report to Council  
2014 Annual Conference – Las Vegas, Nevada**

**Vivian Wynn  
Chair, ALA Committee on Legislation  
July 01, 2014**

**Committee on Legislation highlights of 2014:**

1. Federal Legislative Advocacy Group: In response to the Executive Board's call for three priorities: advocacy, information policy and professional development; COL enthusiastically established a subcommittee to support a new strategic advocacy network, the "Federal Legislative Advocacy Group" (FLAG). FLAG will develop a cadre of library advocates in key congressional districts and states across the country who will respond quickly to urgent issues supporting ALA's federal legislative and policy agenda. OGR staff will work with the subcommittee to provide background and talking points on urgent federal legislative issues as well as assist in coaching and supporting advocates in their lobbying efforts. Part of this mission is implementing a better way to enhance the grassroots lobbying of Senate and House members on the important committees addressing library issues.
2. Network neutrality: Network neutrality or media. COL has written a resolution that is included in this





authenticate and ingest digital and digitized content into FDsys from federal depository libraries and federal agencies; and

5. supports the creation of a no-fee, searchable, online inventory of digital and digitized government materials with downloadable metadata.

The second resolution is CD#20.7:

**Resolution Reaffirming Support for National Open Internet Policies and “Network Neutrality”**

Resolved that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members:

1. reaffirms its support for network neutrality and open Internet policies that enable access in the library, through remote access to library resources, or by other means;
  2. calls on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to codify network neutrality principles following its Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), Docket Number 14-28;
  3. encourages library supporters to become engaged in the FCC’s current Notice of a Proposed Rulemaking on network neutrality; and
  4. urges library supporters to advocate for the development of enforceable policies, whether in legislative proposals or regulatory proceedings, that ensure that the Internet remains an open platform
- advocatform

government webinars that will continue to be held in the coming months by ALA and iPAC at the University of Maryland. The subcommittee will continue to hold monthly conference calls to their work.

## **Government Information**

The Government Information Subcommittee (GIS) held two meetings at ALA Annual 2014 conference. The first meeting was held jointly with the Government Documents Round Table's (GODORT) Legislation Committee. During this meeting the committees heard from; Mary Alice Baish and Cindy Etkin from the Government Printing Office (GPO) regarding GPO's National Plan for the Future of the FDLP, Maggie Farrell regarding the COL FDLP Task Force's final report and Wayne Strickland from the National Technical Information Service (NTIS). At the conclusion of these updates and subsequent discussions, the committees turned their attention to and endorsed the resolution on preserving public access to scientific and technical reports available through the NTIS. The subcommittee will continue to hold regular conference calls.

## **Grassroots**

The COL Grassroots Advocacy Subcommittee held two meetings at the 2014 Annual Conference. At the first meeting the group was briefed on the new Federal Legislative Advocacy Group (FLAG). The subcommittee then analyzed the 2014 National Library Legislative Day and discussed ways to improve future legislative days. Members were shown the new ALA Legislative Action Center and examples of how other organizations are using the same advocacy software as ALA. The subcommittee then received flash drive copies of Stephanie Vance's new report, "Speak Out", a summary of ALA advocacy resources. Members will submit comments to Stephanie and COL by the end of the summer. At the second meeting, members recapped the existing advocacy resources of the ALA Washington Office and ways to promote them. It was decided that by Midwinter, the subcommittee will develop a power point presentation that members can use in their conference meetings to highlight advocacy initiatives and resources.

## **Legislation Assembly**

The Legislation Assembly met Monday morning of the 2014 ALA Annual Conference. At this meeting, the staff provided a legislative update to the assembly. The assembly received an update from the units with a representative in attendance including an update on resolutions being worked on at this conference; including COL's net neutrality resolution. Finally, assembly members were encouraged to submit 2014-15 representative from their units to the Washington Office.



This resolution was adopted by the ALA Council on July 1, 2014

**Resolution Reaffirming Support for National Open Internet Policies and “Network Neutrality”**

Whereas America’s libraries “preserve our democratic society by making available the widest possible range of viewpoints, options, and ideas” (53:8);

Whereas the Internet now serves as a platform for information exchange, intellectual discourse, civic engagement, creativity, research, innovation, and learning;

Whereas the terms “network neutrality” and “open Internet” refer to the use of high-speed Internet, including broadband, to deliver any content or to facilitate the use of any service in a neutral fashion without a preferential structure favoring some providers of content or services to the detriment of other providers;

Whereas public concerns are being raised that Internet service providers have incentives to restrict Internet openness and may act on these incentives in ways that would unconstitutionally burden freedoms of speech and assembly, and inhibit civic engagement, educational achievement, and economic growth;

Whereas the January 14, 2014, U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit decision in *Verizon v. FCC* overturned the Open Internet Order and other Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules protecting

7. encourages library supporters to become engaged in the FCC's current Notice of a Proposed Rulemaking on network neutrality; and
8. urges library supporters to advocate for the development of enforceable policies, whether in legislative proposals or regulatory proceedings, that ensure that the Internet remains an open platform for activities such as information exchange, intellectual discourse, civic engagement, creativity, innovation, and learning.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association

Keith Michael Fiels  
ALA Executive Director and Secretary of the ALA Council  
Tuesday, July 1, 2014, in Las Vegas, Nevada

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Endorsed by:  
The Intellectual Freedom Committee  
Association of College and Research Libraries  
Library Research Round Table  
Office of Information Technology Policy Advisory Committee

Policy history:  
Original resolution endorsed by ALA Council 6/28/06  
See also: Policy: 53.8, 50.15 and CD #50, 6/26/84

We refer you to the ALA Office of Government Relations ~~Six~~ **Month Report** that gives you additional background information about ALA's federal legislative activities since Midwinter 2014.



**OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**  
**Six-Month Report**  
**January 1–June 1, 2014**

**Policy Discussions Continue at ALA Midwinter Meeting**

Large numbers of attendees participated in policy sessions hosted by the ALA Washington Office at the 2014 ALA Midwinter Meeting, including conference sessions that explored E-rate funding, copyright lawsuits, ebook access, federal depository libraries and internet filtering. More than one hundred attendees gathered to hear insider information on last June’s National Security Agency leak from **Guardian** Editor Spencer Ackerman. During other ALA Washington Office sessions, publishing and library experts discussed the best ways libraries can bring together authors and readers in the digital age. In one copyright session, Google Legal Counsel Fred von Lohmann discussed the Google Book Search lawsuit court ruling. Finally, library and policy leaders at the conference detailed ALA’s vision for an E-rate 2.0 that better serves America’s libraries and communities.

**ALA Washington Office Launches Video Advocacy Campaign**

In January, the ALA Washington Office launched “Libraries Matter,” a series of four videos that highlight the ways that funds from the Library Services Technology Act (LSTA) are used by libraries to help patrons. LSTA funds are used to support digital literacy, high-speed internet access, small business assistance, job assistance, ebooks and classes for New Americans. The visual videos can be used by library advocates to educate policymakers and Capitol Hill staff about library issues and show legislators the ways that libraries impact their communities. Access the videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5E1ShbPqE4CQ1v86FXWJfZLSjSaXngIM>.





On April 1, 2014, the ALA Washington Office submitted comments to the U.S. Department of Education on the Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) grant program. IAL was funded in FY 2014 at \$25 million and is a competitive grant program where, by law, a minimum of half of this money must go to low-income schools to update and maintain their school libraries. The rest of the money goes to national non-profits that work for childhood literacy.

### **ALA Responds to House Budget Proposal that Dismisses Role of IMLS**

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, ALA President Barbara Stripling responded to the new budget released from Representative Paul Ryan (R-WI), the House Budget Committee Chairman. The proposal denounces the critical role that the Institute of Museum and Library Services plays in supporting civic engagement, literacy and lifelong learning in more than 123,000 libraries nationwide. Rep. Ryan recommends that the federal government not have a role in libraries and that Congress shift the federal agency's responsibilities to the private sector in his 2015 fiscal year budget resolution. In Rep. Ryan's own state of Wisconsin, more than 65 percent of libraries report that they are the only free access point to the Internet in their communities. Just blocks from Rep. Ryan's Wisconsin office, more than 716,000 visitors used the Hedberg Public Library in Janesville, Wisconsin to access library computers and research databases, check out books and receive job training in 2013.

### **Spending Bill Passed for 2014 Fiscal Year**

In January 2014, President Obama signed a \$1.1 trillion spending bill to fund the U.S. federal government through September 2014. The legislation partially restores funding to the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)—the primary source of annual funding for libraries in the federal budget—that were dramatically cut in the 2013 fiscal year under sequestration. The total amount appropriated for LSTA increased from \$175,044,000 to \$180,909,000 for fiscal year 2014. President Obama's spending bill included language that supports open access—a win for libraries and public access to federally-funded information. While we celebrate this milestone in open access, we are also aware that we have not gone far enough; additional provisions found in the Fair Access to Science and Technology Research Act would make this effort complete.

The 2014 fiscal year spending bill also included funding for Innovative Approaches to Literacy, a competitive grant under the Department of Education that requires that at least half of the funds go to low-income school libraries. This program was appropriated at \$25 million for the 2014 fiscal year. This is a \$2.4 million cut from funding for the 2013 fiscal year. Local education agencies in low-income areas can compete for the grant to help update school libraries with books and other materials.

### **Federal Library Funding Cut in Proposed Budget**

In March, President Barack Obama released his budget request for the 2015 fiscal year. The proposed budget for the LSTA Act falls \$2 million short from the \$180.9 million enacted by the U.S. Congress for the 2014 fiscal year. The big hit came to the state grant program, with slight increases to the set aside for Native Americans and Hawaiians and the National Leadership grants. On a conference call with stakeholders, Institute of Museum and Library Services Director Susan Hildreth discussed the Laura Bush 21st Century grants programs, saying that her agency is working on a National Continuing Education Platform so library employees can continue their education around new services and technologies.

On a disappointing note, the President's budget did not include any resources for school libraries. The budget did, however, include professional development funding for school librarians, teachers and leaders who provide high-speed internet access to students. The Obama Administration requested that \$200 million

dollars be allocated to ConnectEDucators, a new initiative that will ensure that school professionals are well-prepared to use high-speed internet resources in a way that improves classroom instruction and student learning. The ConnectEDucators program is an extension of the Administration's ConnectED initiative.

Additionally, President Obama's budget requests funding support for school librarians through the Department of Education's Race to the Top program. The Equity and Opportunity Program assists states and school districts in high poverty areas in offering the best educators and school librarians. Currently, there are two sign-on letters

supporter of the Library Services and Technology Act, the only federal funding program exclusively for libraries.