

ALA PUBLIC POLICY AND ADVOCACY

Six-month Report to Board and Council

January 9, 2020

FEDERAL LEGISLATION AND POLICY UPDATES

LIBRARY FUNDING

Libraries win historic increase in FY 2020 federal appropriations

Following a year of intense engagement by ALA members, Congress approved the largest increase in Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding in 12 years. All library-related programs were targeted for elimination in the President's FY 2020 budget request. The budget bill was signed by the President on December 20.

Congress appropriated \$252 million for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)—a \$10 million increase—as, which includes a \$6.2 million increase dedicated to LSTA. Highlights from the \$195.4 million for LSTA include:

- \$166.8 million for LSTA Grants to States (\$160.8 million in FY2019)
- \$5.3 million for LSTA Native American Library Services (\$5.1 million in FY2019)
- \$10 million for LSTA Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian grants (\$10 million in FY2019)
- \$13.4 million for LSTA National Leadership for Libraries (\$13.4 million in FY2019)

Overall funding for the Department of Education increased by \$1.3 billion, raising its total budget to \$72.8 billion. The Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) program, another priority for ALA, also escaped the White House's original proposed elimination and received \$27 million for FY2020, the same level as last year. Other library-eligible programs received increases:

- \$1.21 billion for Title IV Part A Well-Rounded Education (\$1.17 billion in FY2019)
- \$192 million for Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Grants (\$190 million in FY2019)
- \$1.25 billion for 21st Century Community Learning Centers (\$1.22 billion in FY2019)
- \$16.3 billion for Title I Grants to Local Education Agencies (\$15.9 billion in FY2019)
- \$2.13 billion for Title II Supporting Effective Instruction (\$2.06 billion in FY2019)

The Library of Congress, the National Library of Me

The final spending bill passed December 19 added funding for libraries and averted a government shutdown.

Level funding in the current fiscal environment is considered a win; increased funding is a major accomplishment. Library funding has steadily increased over the past three years. As advocates continue to demonstrate the impact libraries have on communities, ALA is in a stronger position than ever to start the FY2021 budget cycle.

ALA endorses Crosby Kemper as IMLS Director Nominee

On November 13, Aid0i

registration, the authority of the Register to manage the Office's modernization activities, and the robustness of Library of Congress information technology security as well as legislative changes necessary for a modern and efficient Copyright Office system. Rights holders believe

University) and the [Library Copyright Institute](#), an IMLS-funded program designed to help further develop copyright expertise among librarian

ALA secured funding and in December awarded more than \$100,000 to 59 libraries nationwide to support their Census activities. On November 4, ALA began [inviting applications for \\$2,000 mini-grants](#)

Cook's departure in November 2017. Previously, Halpern worked for 30 years in the U.S. House of Representatives.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

U.S. Court of Appeals provides mixed decision on net neutrality

On October 1, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit upheld the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) authority to issue its 2018 Order eliminating network neutrality protections while also vacating parts of the order and remanding other parts. Importantly, the court vacated the portion of the Order in which the FCC attempted to preempt state or local efforts to protect an open internet. In the case—*Mozilla et al v. Federal Communications Commission (FCC)*—consumer groups and some companies sought to restore net neutrality protections that the FCC passed in 2015 but eliminated in 2017. ALA President Wanda Brown issued a statement the [same day](#). ALA will continue to work with open internet advocates to plan next steps for action.

FCC releases anticipated Category 2 Order for E-rate

In December the FCC [released](#) the long-awaited Category 2 Order, which determines the rules for how libraries and schools will apply for funding for Wi-Fi and associated costs starting in 2021 and into the foreseeable future. In September ALA filed two sets of comments with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in its most recent E-rate [Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#) seeking stakeholder input on whether the current category 2 (C2) budget system for internal connections (including Wi-Fi) funding should be made permanent after its five-year test period. ALA fully supports the C2 budget system as more libraries than ever before are now receiving funds, including rural remote libraries as well as those in urban centers. There were, however, improvements the FCC could make to ensure all libraries benefit from the availability of funding. ALA comments called for an increase in library budgets, a series of steps to simplify the process as it is made permanent, and the inclusion of filtering and security software and tools as eligible for funding. ALA Senior Policy Fellow Bob Bocher prepared a [summary](#) of the Category 2 Order to assist applicants with navigating the rule changes, and the E-rate Task Force will be discussing additional outreach and education opportunities during its Midwinter business meeting.

In addition to Mr. Bocher's leadership role within ALA, he recently completed two 3-year terms as the library representative on the Board of Directors of Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), the agency that administers the E-rate program and other Universal Service Fund programs for the FCC. ALA recommended Amber Gregory, Manager of E-rate Services for the Arkansas State Library and Chair of ALA's E-rate Task Force. FCC Chairman Ajit Pai formally appointed Ms. Gregory in December. Her term begins in January 2020.

ALA supports digital inclusion legislation

PPA worked with Congresswoman Grace Meng (NY-6) to draft legislation to address the homework gap. The Congresswoman introduced the [Closing the Homework Gap through Mobile Hotspots Act](#) which, among other things, would provide funding for libraries to loan hotspots to

ALA conducts Advocacy Training in Missouri

In early October, Emily Wagner and Megan Cusick traveled to Kansas City to attend the Missouri Library Association Conference and present

On behalf of ALA President Wanda Brown and AASL President Mary Keeling, PPA submitted letters in support of school libraries and librarians to the Virginia Department of Education, the Illinois State Board of Education, and several school districts. On behalf of President Wanda Brown and United for Libraries President Peter Pearson, PPA submitted a letter to the City of Norfolk, Virginia, in support of the library board of trustees and their request for a unified public library system.

The state ecosystem task force is developing an assessment tool that will help states reflect on the strength of their ecosystems in the focus areas of leadership, communication, collaboration, and sustainability. A complete toolkit, including supporting resources and implementation plan, will be presented at ALA Annual. The group will also make a proposal to the Committee on Library Advocacy about moving the ecosystem work forward after the task force sunsets in June 2020.

In addition, PPA continues to collaborate with other ALA units and President-Elect Julius Jefferson on planning for a national tour of libraries, scheduled to take place during the summer of 2020.

OTHER POLICY ISSUES

PPA speaks on behalf of ALA members on policy and legislation at every level of government. The following list includes a sampling of congressional testimony, comments filed with federal agencies and coalition letters which ALA has endorsed with its name, a coveted asset among allies and coalition partners from across the political spectrum:

- [Letter](#) to support bipartisan and bicameral legislation that would create a pilot summer learning and meals grant program. The Summer Meals and Learning Act was introduced by Senator Merkley (D-OR) in the Senate and by Congressmen Morelle (D-NY-25) and Katko (R-NY-24) in the House. Diana Price – a Virginia librarian participated in a Congressional briefing outlining how libraries and schools provide summer learning and meal programs.
- [Amicus brief](#) with the Supreme Court filed by The American Library Association, along with the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), the Society 2.53536(i)-2.53536(s)8.27264(a)3..53536(h)-0.956417(e)3.15789

- [Coalition letter](#) to the House of Representatives regarding the Access to Congressionally Mandated Reports Act, H.R. 736 to improve government transparency and create a central repository of agency reports submitted to Congress.
- [Coalition letter](#) to oppose the CASE Act that excessively penalizes users of online

World conference featured an interview with ALA Executive Director Mary Ghikas, who discussed trends and challenges in developing digital lending.

PPA and CMO together launched ebooksforall.org, home site for campaign updates and resources for libraries, including templates for spreading the campaign through social and print media, and featured examples of advocacy tactics from several library leaders across the country. State library associations and local public libraries across the nation continue to issue their own statements and conduct mini-campaigns as well, including executive op-eds in local news outlets, emails to patrons, and more. On October 30, two days before the embargo went into effect, ALA staff and others hand [delivered](#) more than 150,000 signatures to Macmillan CEO John Sargent opposing the company's new terms.

Also in October, in response to an inquiry from the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on

interview-ready clothing. They also partnered with local barbers and hairdressers to help participants present their best selves at the interviews. Other libraries will be building partnerships with job centers or economic development councils such as the Carson City (NV) Library which will collaborate with JOIN Inc., a local workforce development organization to target job seekers to prepare application materials and hone their job seeking skills.

ALA connects FCC Commissioner Geoffrey Starks with Boston Public Library

During a visit facilitated by ALA staff, FCC Commissioner Geoffrey Starks, spent the afternoon of September 16 learning about how Boston Public Library supports job seekers through the [Kirstein Business Library & Innovation Center](#) and its innovative programs addressing the digital divide, [Tech Goes Home](#). Staff shared a story about one patron who enrolled in Tech Goes Home: formerly incarcerated for 27 years, a pa

PPA holds workshop on contract override

ALA hosted a contract override workshop in Washington September 19-20. With the leadership of Jim Neal, 24 participants investigated the challenges that licenses in the digital age pose for libraries of all types. The expert invitees included library practitioners from across the country as well as representatives from the Association of College & Research Libraries, American Association of Law Libraries, Association of Research Libraries, International Federation of Library Associations and the R Street Institute. Based on these discussions, a detailed articulation of the challenges and opportunities posed by licenses will be developed along with a policy agenda and plans.

PPA welcomes AASL leaders to Washington

The Public Policy and Advocacy Unit hosted a strategic planning and brainstorming session on September 6 for American Association of School Libraries leadership, PPA staff and other library stakeholders to explore how to advance school library priorities in Washington. ALA's education consultants from the Penn Hill Group also participated in the event.

PPA hosts UFL leaders

United For Libraries (UFL) President Peter Pearson