

Sequestration delayed

On January 2, 2013, well beyond the 11th hour, the U.S. Congress finally passed, and President Obama signed into law, H.R. 8, the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012. The new law steered the country away from the “fiscal cliff,” for at least a couple months. The hallmark of the agreement was the current Bush-era tax cuts that were extended to individuals making less than \$400,000, and married couples making less than \$450,000. In addition, the law delayed sequestration—an automatic cut to all federal discretionary programs, including many federal library programs—until March 1, 2013.

Had sequestration been implemented at the beginning of January the across-the-board cut to all programs would have been 8.2 percent. For example, the impact on the Institute of Museum and Library Services would have been a \$19 million cut. However, the delay compresses the cut from nine months to the seven remaining months left in the fiscal year.

The Office of Management and Budget will prorate the percentage cut and, thus, it will be slightly less than the original 8.2 percent. The impact on federal library programs funded by the IMLS, as well as school library programs funded by the U.S. Department of Education, are unclear at this time. For additional information, please see www.ala.org/advocacy/libfunding/fed/sequestration.

ALA joins coalition to Protect Library Lending Rights

On October 23, 2012, ALA joined, as a founding member, the Owners’ Rights Initiative (www.ownersrightsinitiative.org)—a coalition of retailers, libraries, educators, Internet companies, and associations—working to protect ownership rights in the United States. The


coalition was formed to champion “first-sale rights,” or ownership rights, at the center of *Kirtsaeng v. Wiley & Sons, Inc.*, a case heard by the U.S. Supreme Court, October 29, 2012. An adverse decision by the Supreme Court in this case (i.e., upholding the Second Circuit Court of Appeals decision) could call into question libraries’ right to lend books and other materials manufactured abroad.

In addition, Supreme Court’s decision in the case of *Kirtsaeng v. Wiley* is not anticipated until sometime into 2013. While the outcome of the case is still unknown, it is becoming increasingly clear that the potential for legislative activity addressing the first sale doctrine is likely. With libraries’ ability to lend in the balance, ALA will continue to monitor the potential for legislation and work with ORI coalition partners to uphold and protect libraries’ ability to lend materials no matter where they were manufactured. For additional information, please see www.ala.org/advocacy/copyright/firstsale.

National Library Legislative Day, May 7-8, 2013, in Washington, D.C.

Registration for the 2013 National Library Legislative Day (NLLD) is now open at www.ala.org/nlld. Hosted by ALA’s Office of Government Relations in Washington, D.C., NLLD is a two-day event that draws hundreds of library supporters from all types of libraries, including academic and public and school libraries.

May 7 consists of a day of briefings for library participants on the most pressing legislative issues facing libraries, followed by an evening reception on Capitol Hill. May 8 is devoted to library participants visiting their elected officials in the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives.

With the newly sworn in 113th Congress, it is more important than ever to make sure the collective voice of library supporters is heard by our elected officials. 

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