

ALA issues statement opposing House budget proposal

In March, the U.S. House passed a budget resolution proposing to eliminate all funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), and with it programs such as the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). In response, ALA President Courtney Young released a public statement denouncing the House's recommendation to eliminate the federal agency. The Senate version of the budget bill does not recommend eliminating IMLS. ALA will continue to monitor legislative activities to protect funding for our nation's libraries. The organization expects that budget and appropriations discussions may dominate much of Congress' agenda for the balance of the year.

ALA works to support federal library funding

ALA led efforts to secure broad, bipartisan congressional support for federal appropriations letters endorsing funding for the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL). Thirty-one Senators signed the LSTA "Dear Appropriators" letter, and 25 signed the IAL letter. In the House, 68 representatives signed the LSTA letter, while 125 signed the IAL letter. ALA also delivered numerous grassroots alerts and notices to library advocates in an effort to support these letters, ultimately sending 6,160 emails to more than 90 percent of all Members of Congress (487 of 533 total legislators).

Senator Cornyn receives Madison Award for championing public's right to know

In March, ALA awarded Senator John Cornyn

(R-TX) the 2015 James Madison Award during the 17th Annual Freedom of Information Day in Washington, D.C. Senator Cornyn has spearheaded efforts to support open access to taxpayer-funded research and to improve the public's right to know government information. Just hours before receiving the Madison Award, the Senator reintroduced the latest version of Fair Access to Science and Technology Research Act (FASTR) of 2015 (S.779).

ALA organizes access for library leaders to IRS tax form program officials

The ALA Washington Office hosted a conference call in March with IRS officials to discuss problems and issues surrounding the distribution of 2014 tax forms and instruction publications to libraries.

The IRS has funded a committee to facilitate changes in the distribution for the future, and the agency is calling for library leaders to comment on ways to improve the Tax Forms Outlet Program.

Education businesses, associations demand increase in school library funding

In mid-March, a coalition of more than 20 education businesses, associations, and media groups—including Scholastic Inc., EBSCO Information Services, and the Association of American Publishers—called on the U.S. Congress to support dedicated school library funding in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which provides federal funding for national K-12 education programs.

Coalition leaders sent the joint letter to U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Chairman Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and HELP Committee Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-WA). *JW*

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