

### Federal funding for libraries

Under normal circumstances, ALA would be reporting progress on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 #FundLibraries campaign as federal spending bills move through the full House and Senate. Now, ALA is both monitoring the annual appropriations cycle and advocating for resources libraries need to emerge from the pandemic and phase in the reopening of their facilities. Congress has completed four relief funding bills (three of them narrow in focus), is working on a fifth, and may consider additional measures in the coming months.

The House approved their proposal for a fourth large-scale COVID-19 relief package, the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act (HEROES, H.R. 6800). The bill includes more than \$3 trillion in federal aid to respond to COVID-19, including several education- and workforce-related funding provisions. However, the package includes a nominal \$5 million for IMLS.

The HEROES Act has moved on to the Senate, which indicated it will neither pass the package at the House levels nor act with any urgency on new legislation. ALA continues to engage library advocates and work with Senate supporters to secure library funding in any final spending package. As the campaign proceeds, it will be vital to share library impact stories to prove to the Senate that funding for libraries is a worthwhile investment in recovery for communities.

In preparation for future relief efforts, ALA led a broad library trade coalition letter calling for \$2 billion in library stabilization funding. This letter was signed by 35 organi-

zations, including the American Federation of Teachers, Association of Research Libraries, COSLA, National League of Cities, and U.S. Conference of Mayors.

### Publishers sue the Internet Archive (IA)

On June 1, John Wiley & Sons, Hachette Book Group, Penguin Random House, and HarperCollins, members of the American Association of Publishers (AAP), filed suit against IA arguing that it is engaging in copyright infringement by making digitized copies of its print books to lend to the public. This case is the latest installment in the eBook saga that extends back to 2004, with more recent activities including ALA engagements with the Macmillan Publishers embargo and the House Judiciary Committee investigation, under the leadership of Rep. David Cicilline (D-Rhode Island).

As ALA President Wanda Brown told the Washington Post, “The complaint of the Plaintiffs against the Internet Archive is strongly indicative that the current system of library eBook lending is broken. Libraries often pay \$60 for one copy of an eBook as compared to typical price of \$14 for consumer retail and the library gets only two years of access—and then libraries must pay again for an additional two years, and so on. The unfairness of the current inequitable system opens the door for organizations, such as the Internet Archive, to develop alternatives that provide affordable access to libraries. The American Library Association encourages a parallel track of 1) engagement and negotiation with publishers and distributors, 2) innovation, and 3) public policy developed by legislative, judicial, and regulatory entities, to lead to a fair system for authors, publishers, distributors, retailers, libraries, and the general public.” *zc*

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