

New librarian appoints new leadership at the Library of Congress

One month after her swearing in as Librarian of Congress, Carla Hayden made some significant—and controversial—staffing changes at the Library. On November 2, she announced the structure of the Office of the Librarian, including several senior-level appointments.

Law librarian David Mao will continue to serve as deputy Librarian of Congress, a position he held prior to serving as acting Librarian of Congress after the departure of former Librarian James Billington.

Robert Newlen was appointed to serve as deputy librarian for institutional advancement. Well known in the library community for his active membership in ALA, Newlen has served in a number of capacities at the Library since his arrival in 1975, most recently as chief of staff. Two new appointees are Chief of Staff Liz Morrison and Chief Communications Officer Roswell Encina, who served with Hayden as communications director at Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore.

In a public statement released by the Library of Congress, Hayden explained that “this structure is designed to foster a collaborative approach across the library’s many divisions, support institution-wide planning for our digital future, and consolidate our communications and public outreach efforts.”

But not everyone is convinced.

In what has come to be a controversial move, less than two weeks prior to announcing the new office structure Hayden announced the appointment of then-Copyright Office register Maria Pallante as senior advisor for digital strategy and Karyn Temple Claggett as acting register of copyrights. Three days

later, Pallante resigned from her position. Hayden accounted for the reassignment and replacement of Pallante as an effort “to move aggressively toward making [the Library’s] collections as widely accessible as possible.”

While Hayden’s action was a management decision fully within her discretion as leader of a government agency, motion picture and music industry leaders as well as members of Congress lamented the loss of Pallante as an injustice perpetrated under the influence of the tech industry.

A *Wall Street Journal* editorial noted Hayden’s former presidency of ALA, an organization that “takes a permissive view of copyright law and accepts money from Google.”

The timing of Pallante’s departure may have come as a surprise, yet it was an inevitable outcome of her public advocacy for removal of the Copyright Office from the Library of Congress.

ALA reacted to the announcement saying that the decision “makes clear that the future of the U.S. Copyright Office is a high priority of the Librarian of Congress. ALA stands ready to assist Dr. Hayden and the staff of the Library to recruit a new Register who is committed to shaping a copyright system that balances the fair protection of copyrighted information and the broadest possible use of that information to foster innovation, education and creativity of all kinds.”

At this point, it’s hard to predict what impact the results of the elections will have on copyright policy, but one thing is for certain: the future of all policies libraries care about—from copyright to privacy to government information—depends on the advocacy of library professionals.

Stay tuned for more information about the next Library Legislative Day on May 1-2, 2017, in Washington, D.C. *ZZ*

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