

ALA Committee/Taskforce Report Form to Council

TO: ALA Council

DATE: January 9, 2026

RE: *(select one)*

ACTION REQUESTED

INFORMATION

REPORT

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT: *(add below)*

Action requested from Councilors is to cast their vote to: *(if applicable)*

ACTION REQUESTED BY: *(add committee name)*

CONTACT PERSON: *(add chair information)*

Susan Hempstead, COL Chair, shempstead@sno-isle.org; 206-604-3750

STAFF LIAISON CONTACT:

Lisa Varga, lvarga@alawash.org

BACKGROUND: *(add information)*

See two attachments.

ALA Committee/Taskforce
Report Form to Council

Public Policy and Advocacy (PPA)/ Committee on Legislation (COL) Activity for Report January 9, 2026 Report

ALA/COL Highlights

- Ed Garcia ends term as Chair of COL, and Susan Hempstead becomes chair of COL.
- Chair Hempstead and PPA staff host series of Drop In listening tours and meetings for COL members.
- COL Members Orientation Handbook updated.
- National Library Legislative Day Announced, February 25-26, 2026:
<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/nlld>
- PPA committee ITPAC (Information and Technology Policy Advisory Committee) identified as one of many committees to sunset by June 2026 as part of ALA Forward.

Congress/Administration/Agency

- ALA disappointed as [FCC ends funding](#) for library hotspot lending and school bus Wi-Fi. ALA served as a leader in the advocacy campaign to defend E-Rate hotspots for the majority of 2025 engaging in both Hill and FCC outreach with partners and library advocates.
- ALA submits [USF Contribution Reform comments](#) to bipartisan bicameral USF Working Group.
- Universal Service Fund upheld by Supreme Court in June decision
<https://www.ala.org/news/2025/06/ala-response-usf-supreme-court-decision> .
- [The Right to Read Act was reintroduced in Congress](#) by Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) and Rep. Adelita Grijalva (D-AZ), which supports the work of school librarians while defending their rights. Rep. Adelita Grijalva won a special election to serve the remainder of the term for her father, and long-time library champion, Rep. Raul Grijalva. The Grijalva family includes several librarians.
- [ALA statement](#) opposing dismantling of the U.S. Department of Education. ALA raises concern over moving programs for students and educators to non-experienced agencies.
- ALA partners with outside organizations to expand the voice and reach of libraries. For example, ALA added its voice to policy letters, including:
 - [Title IV Coalition letter opposing dissolving U.S Department of Education Broad education coalition letter calling for increased funding](#)
 - [Public Service Loan Forgiveness \(PSLF\) letter](#) expressing concern over possible changes to the program.

- Committee for Education Funding ([CEF](#)) [letter](#) calling on Congress to fully fund all education programs.
- IMLS Litigation. Update on two active court cases opposing the [President's actions to dismantle IMLS](#).
 - *Rhode Island v. Trump* (District Court for Rhode Island)
 - On Nov. 21, the court ruled for the plaintiffs and permanently enjoined the Administration from dismantling IMLS with immediate nationwide effect.
 - Potentially the Administration may appeal the ruling, which would be due not later than **Jan. 20**. If the Administration appeals, potentially it may ask the appeals court to stay (pause) the district court's injunction, which the appeals court might or might not grant.
 - We are monitoring what actions IMLS takes in response to the injunction. On Dec. 3, [IMLS announced it was reinstating all grants](#).
 - *ALA v. Sonderling* (District Court for D.C.)
 - ALA filed our opening brief on the merits on Sept. 5. The government filed its brief on Nov. 25.
 - ALA's final brief is due Feb. 17, and the government's final brief is due March 3.
- [GAO Study released](#) which found thousands of public libraries with a building system in poor condition. [ALA issues press release](#) thanking key Members of Congress for calling for the important study.
- [Funding for libraries fares well in House and Senate bills](#). Increased funding for LSTA and level funding for Innovative Approaches to Literacy were recommended by both chambers.
- ALA submits [comments to U.S. Department of Education](#) addressing proposed priorities for federal grants.
- [ALA offers guidance article](#) on federal government shutdown and [follow up information](#). The federal government remained closed for 43 days, the longest such federal shutdown. The shutdown ended upon the agreement of a temporary funding measure (called a Continuing Resolution) which expires January 30.
- House Appropriations Committee Chair [Rep. Tom Cole \(R-OK\) visited](#) Oklahoma's Pioneer Library System Noble Branch in August.
- ALA submits comments to U.S. Department of Education addressing the agencies proposed workforce development priorities.

Activities:

- PPA hosts ALA, AASL chapter leaders for two-day in-person advocacy workshop in Chicago

- [In December 2025, state library associations from 49 states convened in Chicago for the Chapter Advocacy Academy—an intensive, 48-hour training hosted by ALA and AASL to prepare incoming chapter leaders to serve as powerful political strategists, media voices, funding advocates, and defenders of the freedom to read. Launched in response to escalating attacks on libraries beginning in 2020, the Academy equips incoming state association leaders with advanced advocacy skills, fosters a national cohort for sharing strategies and resources, and adapts its curriculum each year based on participants’ top priorities. This year’s program focused on safeguarding library funding and included targeted training on making compelling funding cases, collaboration across library types, and building relationships with decision makers. For many attendees, the workshop was the first time they met their ALA or AASL counterpart and the workshop was a space to collaborate, plan for the year ahead, and strengthen their peer network. ALA will continue to support incoming leaders and foster peer networks through ongoing check-ins and virtual community spaces.](#)
- ALA launches [Faith for Libraries campaign](#) against censorship with Interfaith Alliance and UABB.
- ALA releases [Civic Collaboration Guide](#) with League of Women Voters.
- E-Rate Task Force launches eLearning course for E-Rate State Coordinators.
- Megan Janicki, Emily Durkin, and members of ALA’s E-Rate Task Force attend SHLB AnchorNets annual conference; Megan Janicki, Lauren Abner, and Christine Morris [speak on panel](#) about library funding.
- COL holds a members’ Virtual Retreat with guest speakers
 - Rep. Kim Schrier (D-WA)
 - Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI) senior policy advisory Moira Lenehan
 - Joey Wender, SHLB Coalition
 - Elyse Wasch, Penn Hill Group
 - Finalize Legislative Agenda
- [ALA hosts Show Up For Our Libraries Webinar](#) held September 9.
- [ALA hosts November Webinar](#): Show up, Speak Up: ONE VOICE for Library Ecosystem Funding.
- AASL President and ALA member Amanda Kordeliski participates in CEF Congressional briefing: [CEF's FY 2026 Education Budget Book - "Education Matters: Continue to Invest in America's Future"](#) July 30
- PPA staff member, Kevin Maher, participates in Committee for Education Funding Congressional briefing: [Education Funding Forecast: Chaos with the Expectation of More Cuts](#) November 11.

- ALA [Prison Libraries White Paper](#) released entitled Investing in Prison Libraries: A Cost-Effective Path to Safer Communities and Second Chances.
- ALA leads education delegation for the annual Committee for Education Funding's Hill Day held July 12.

FYI

- ALA PPA receives acceptance to Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, <https://civilrights.org/#> .
- ALA PPA Joined the American Society of Association Executives Community Impact Coalition, <https://www.cicoalition.org/> .

**American Library Association (ALA)
Committee on Legislation
Federal Legislative and Public Policy Agenda for 2026**

Federal policymakers must uphold the programs and policies that enable libraries to meet their communities' needs for information, learning, skills, and opportunity. We will remain steadfast in defending libraries, library workers, and the freedom to read against political threats.

ALA's Committee on Legislation encourages ALA members and library supporters to advocate on the following library priorities in 2026. ALA will monitor and engage on these and other [federal issues](#) to protect and advance libraries of all types.

To meet this moment, it is essential that ALA members and library supporters continue to Show Up For Our Libraries. Please join in supporting ALA's advocacy by [signing up for advocacy alerts](#), [joining ALA or renewing your membership](#), [donating to ALA](#), and using [ALA's advocacy resources](#) to build effective relationships with decisionmakers.

Funding and Support

[Preserving federal funding](#) for library services is essential to ensuring that every community in America has strong libraries. Key issues for 2026:

Dedicated library programs: Protect key federal agencies and programs, including:

- The Institute of Museum and Library Services, including the Library Services and Technology Act, and in reauthorizing the Museum and Library Services Act;
- The Department of Education, including Innovative Approaches to Literacy and support for [school libraries](#);
- Support for library facilities that are modern, accessible, resilient, and efficient; and
- National library programs, including the Library of Congress, National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled, and the Federal Depository Library Program.

Library-eligible programs: Sustain agencies and programs that support libraries' roles in:

- K-12 and early education, including in reauthorizing the Every Student Succeeds Act;
- Higher education, including in reauthorizing the Higher Education Act;
- Economic and workforce development, including in reauthorizing the [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#); and
- Other crucial community services, including through the National Endowment for the Humanities, Community Development Block Grants, and other applicable programs.

Federal leadership: Ensure that any nominee to lead the Library of Congress or the Institute of Museum and Library Services is well-qualified and will uphold the agency's crucial work.

Library Workers and Institutions

ALA defends libraries and librarianship against threats including censorship or deprofessionalization. Key issues for 2026 include:

Pathways to library careers: Protect pathways to the profession, including Public Service Loan Forgiveness.

Broadband and Digital Opportunity

Libraries in all parts of the country must be able to serve their users with fast and affordable [broadband](#), technology access, and digital skills training. Key issues for 2026:

E-Rate: Safeguard the Universal Service Fund and the E-Rate program. Advocate for a sustainable, predictable, and long-term funding solution. Preserve E-Rate as a flexible program for meeting libraries' local technology needs.

Internet access and digital opportunity: Preserve and expand resources for libraries to support internet access and digital opportunity.

Content access and liability: Protect individual freedom and secure open networks. Preserve liability protections for libraries, including Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act.

Copyright, Licensing, and Competition

Libraries rely on balanced and flexible [copyright policy](#) to enable vital library services. ALA supports a modern copyright system with effective user rights and limitations and exceptions to copyright. Additionally, libraries rely on fair licenses and market practices in order to provide access to digital content such as [e-books](#). Key issues for 2026:

E-books and digital content: Prevent unfair and anti-competitive practices that limit libraries' ability to meet their users' reading and information needs. Preserve libraries' rights under copyright limitations and exceptions.

Copyright Office: Maintain the Librarian of Congress' authority to oversee the Copyright Office.

Government Information and Services

ALA supports policies that assist libraries in providing no-fee permanent public access to [government information](#) and services. Key issues for 2026:

Federal Depository Library Program: Advance the [Federal Depository Library Program](#) and update its statutory authorities.

Public access to research: Ensure public access to publicly-funded research and data.