



## Memorandum

**To:** NJLA Executive Board  
**From:** Eileen M. Palmer, ALA Chapter Councilor  
**Date:** 12/20/2021  
**Re:** Chapter Councilor Report

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Eileen M. Palmer', is positioned to the right of the 'From:' field.

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### **2021 Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey – *deadline extended to January 14, 2022***

All US public libraries are invited to complete this new survey to help us better understand public library staff roles, hiring and retention practices, and equity, diversity, and inclusion work. The survey was developed by PLA's [Measurement, Evaluation, and Assessment Committee](#) in response to field-wide discussions and demand for actionable data about evolving staff roles and diversity and inclusion staffing efforts.

Five reasons why your library should complete the survey:

1. Library leaders need up-to-date and accurate information about staffing and diversity.
2. Contribute to powerful, actionable, and inspirational results for library staff across the country that can help to answer pressing questions such as:
  - What are libraries doing to recruit and retain diverse staff?
  - What are libraries paying directors and new librarians?
  - What types of staff roles exist in US public libraries?
3. The result will provide nationally representative data to inform and engage elected officials, the media, and funders to increase awareness of and support for library workers. PLA will share the results in a freely and publicly accessible report.
4. Your participation helps PLA create tools, resources, and professional development opportunities that are more useful for you in building and advancing equity in your library.

5. The 2021 survey data will create a baseline. When this survey is next administered in 2024, we will be able to see how the field has evolved. We will be able to track and share these trends with the profession.

To complete the survey, login to your library's *free* [Benchmark](#) account at [librarybenchmark.org](http://librarybenchmark.org). Click on "Surveys" in the menu, and you will see this survey listed under "Open Surveys." All public library directors should have received an invitation with login details; if your library did not or if you have any questions, please contact [plabenchmark@ala.org](mailto:plabenchmark@ala.org). Please submit your library's responses by January 14, 2022.

### **Digital content:**

<https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/libraries/article/87941-lawmakers-expand-inquiry-into-library-e-book-market.html>

Congress has reached out to digital content publishers with a series of questions regarding the current marketplace. The letter "...requests information including: copies of standard licensing agreements and a description of restrictions; sales information going back to 2018; information on the kind of patron data that is gathered and kept; whether any data breaches have occurred, including incidents that may have "unintentionally exposed" library or patron data; a description of any legal actions the firms may have undertaken; and information about each firm's 100 most sold or licensed works from 2015 to 2019."

### **ALA Legislative Agenda for 2022 is attached.**

### **ALA statement on censorship and new web resources:**

ALA has issued a strong statement condemning the current organized efforts to remove materials from public libraries and updated its resources to assist library workers in responding to intellectual freedom issues.

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/fight-censorship>

### **Engage Office Hours**

ALA provides access to Engage to support chapters advocacy efforts. Here's an update on training/support opportunities.

Engage Office Hours for administrators of your state's Engage advocacy software:

December 3 – 1:00-2:00 p.m. central (Register here: [ala-events.zoom.us/meeting/register/...](https://ala-events.zoom.us/meeting/register/))

January 7 – 1:00 p.m. central

February 4 – 1:00-2:00 p.m. central

## **Funding Update**

There's not a lot new on the budget front. For regular appropriations, Congress appears to be stalled on finishing up the regular FY 2022 appropriations bills. The House included a \$9 million increase for LSTA which passed this summer. The Senate did not pass any funding bills, but did recommend a \$6 million increase for LSTA in its draft. Until Congress can reach a deal on spending, agencies will operate under last year's funding levels. However, they first need to agree on a Continuing Resolution to keep the government open past this Friday...although even an agreement on a CR seems elusive at this point.

As the final budget bill gets smaller and smaller, so do the odds of BALA being included in it, unfortunately. But if it doesn't move forward in that package, ALA will be looking for other ways forward.

**American Library Association (ALA)  
Committee on Legislation  
Legislative Agenda for 2022**

Policymakers must ensure libraries are equipped to safely meet their communities' needs for technology access, education and learning, economic recovery and development, research, health and well-being, and civic engagement. Policies should support the contributions of school, public, and academic libraries, with emphasis on meeting the needs of underserved groups. Advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion underpin and permeate our legislative advocacy.

ALA's Committee on Legislation encourages ALA members and library supporters to advocate on the following library priorities in 2022. ALA will monitor and engage on these and other [federal issues](#) that affect libraries, and will join with partners and coalitions to promote strong and equitable libraries. We urge ALA members and library supporters to [sign up as advocates](#) and use [ALA's advocacy resources](#) to build effective relationships with decisionmakers.

**Funding and Support**

[Equitable federal funding](#) for library services is essential to ensuring that every community in America has strong libraries. Key issues for 2022:

**Dedicated library programs:** Increase and maintain funding for the:

- Institute of Museum and Library Services, which administers the Library Services and Technology Act, with priority on services and technology for underserved communities;
- Innovative Approaches to Literacy program, with priority on funding for underserved, tribal, and/or high-need [school libraries](#) through the Department of Education;
- Library of Congress, including the National Library Service for the Blind & Print Disabled; and
- Federal Depository Library Program and the Government Publishing Office.

**Library-eligible programs:** Continue and enhance federal programs for which libraries are eligible recipients or partners. Recognize and support libraries' important roles in:

- [Economic and workforce development](#), including in reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act;
- K-12 education, including in reauthorization of the Every Student Succeeds Act; and
- Higher education, including in reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, and preserving eligibility of library workers for Public Service Loan Forgiveness.

**Library infrastructure and sustainability:** Provide support to make library facilities more modern, healthy, safe, sustainable, resilient, and accessible for all users.

### **Internet Access and Digital Inclusion**

To promote digital equity and enable modern library services, 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 2022:

**E-rate:** Improve outreach and technical assistance for applicants to increase library participation in the program, especially in underserved communities. Ensure eligibility of tribal libraries.

**Technology access and training:** Provide funding for libraries to strengthen internet and technology access and digital skills training for all through the Emergency Connectivity Fund, Digital Equity Act, and other legislative possibilities.

**Broad telecommunications policy:** Restore [net neutrality](#) protections and preserve Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act to ensure equitable access to the internet.

### **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 2022:

**E-books and digital content:** Prevent unfair and anti-competitive practices that limit libraries' ability to meet their users' reading and information needs. Advocate for federal legislation and regulation and support state-level initiatives in collaboration with ALA Chapters. Develop strategy for the long-term.

**Copyright Office:** Preserve the Librarian of Congress' authority to manage and oversee the Copyright Office.

### **Government Information and Services**

Libraries provide access to [government information](#) and services in communities across the country. ALA supports policies that assist libraries in providing no-fee permanent public access to government information and equitable access to government services, which includes voting. Key issues for 2022:

**Federal Depository Library Program:** Modernize the [Federal Depository Library Program](#).

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