

### **Talking Points for COL members at Division Meetings:**

- Much like last year, we are anticipating that the President's budget proposal for FY 2019 will eliminate the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the majority of federal library funding.
- This places over \$210 million in federal library funding at risk.
- When we talk about federal library funding, there are several important programs in play.
- Primarily, we are talking about funds administered by the IMLS, including \$186.6 million provided through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), which is primarily dedicated to the Grants to States program.
- By law, every state receives funding per a population-based formula, subject to a 34% state matching requirement. Each state librarian or library agency then determines the best use of those funds in their state. Because states are required to match the Federal funding commitment, a cut on the Federal level causes a reduction at the state level as well.
- The Innovate Approaches to Literacy (IAL) is another library funding program, awarded by the Department of Education, which impacted by the President's budget. IAL the only dedicated source of federal funding for school libraries. In FY 2017, IAL received \$27 million in funding, and at least ½ of that funding was dedicated for school libraries.
- The competition for funding is becoming more intense each year. The pie is getting smaller and smaller. Congress is looking for programs to cut.

### **Why does this sound familiar?**

- This was the challenge we faced last year.
- In response, ALA launched the "save IMLS" campaign and we all worked tirelessly in 2017 to make sure libraries were not cut from the 2018 budget. Last year, over 40,000 emails and calls were made to Congress because of our campaign.

### **Timing:**

- Right now, it isn't clear when the budget will drop. The government shutdown early in January pushed back the initial timeline for the beginning of the FY 2019 budget cycle. We could see a budget proposal as early as next week, or it could be delayed till March.
- We also don't have confirmation yet that IMLS and other federal library funding will be eliminated. Until we have confirmation, it is important that we prepare but not react.
- Once we know what the 2019 budget proposal contains, we will notify the membership.
- Once the budget is officially released, an Action Alert will go live on the ALA Action Center, along with a detailed blog post on District Dispatch. You can expect to see social media messages, emails, and press surrounding the Fund Libraries campaign.
- Keep in mind that Congress has full control over the FY2019 budget, not the President. While we should plan to reach out to Congress after the budget drops, the budget cycle is a long one and the real work won't begin until the Dear Appropriator letters start cycling – likely in March at this point.

- The Washington Office has been working with Congressional champions in both chambers to ensure that there will be a letter circulating to support funding for the Library Services and Technology Act, and a letter supporting funding for the Innovative Approaches to Literacy program. There are always four letters circulating during this stage of the budget cycle – two in the House, and two in the Senate.
- Once the letters start circulating, we'll be asking members to contact their legislators, to ask them to sign on in support of these programs. The more signatures we get on these letters, the more likely it is that we'll get the funding.
- In addition to sending emails and making phone calls, we are asking you to consider inviting members of Congress and their staff to your libraries, so that they can see critical library services firsthand.
- While we wait for the budget to drop, we'd like to ask you to start gathering state-specific stories and collecting data about the impact of your libraries. Your elected officials are much more likely to pay attention if they hear concrete examples about the services libraries provide for their constituents.
- To help you collect these stories, our office is providing this year is a new story collection form. We'll be asking library supporters to share stories, videos, or photos with us over the next few months. Those stories will be made available to state associations and chapter leaders, to support their outreach to their members of Congress.
- The Washington Office will take your stories with them to their meetings on the Hill. And we hope that you will find creative ways to share these stories with your elected officials and on social media.
- You can find the form to share stories on [ala.org/fundlibraries](http://ala.org/fundlibraries)
- On that page, you'll also find two spreadsheets tracking signatures on the LSTA and IAL letters. One spreadsheet tracks the Senate and one tracks the House. When the Dear Appropriator portion of the campaign starts, we'll be updating that form in real time so that you can see which of your members of Congress have signed, and which have not. We hope that this will help you plan your outreach strategies and messaging.

**If they ask you about:**

- Other programs that might face cuts:
  - The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Striving Readers, and Title IV (a), could also face cuts.
- What we are doing about these other programs:
  - While these programs are important to our members, ALA focuses primarily on IMLS, LSTA, and IAL. The NEA, NEH, NARA, and other programs and agencies have large advocacy organizations supporting them, whereas ALA members and library supporters are likely to be the only voices speaking up on behalf of IMLS, LSTA, and IAL. ALA will continue to work with other organizations to support funding for these agencies and programs.

- What is the Museum and Library Services Act?
  - The Museum and Library Services Act of 2017, S. 2271, reauthorizes the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), showing congressional support for the federal agency. IMLS administers funding through the Library Services Technology Act, the only federal program that exclusively covers funding for libraries, providing more than \$183 million through the Grants to States program. Reauthorization would mean more support for federal library funding during the FY 2019 budget cycle.
  - It is important to note that while MLSA will reauthorize IMLS, the agency can still receive funding without a reauthorization. Passage of S. 2271, however, further demonstrates the commitment to library funding from Congress.
- FY 2018
  - It is important to remember that Congress is still working on last year's budget for FY 2018 even though they are starting on the FY 2019 budget. While the House and Senate appropriators rejected the President's elimination requests for FY 2018, the full-year budget has not yet passed. We may need to advocate for FY 2018 federal library funding while the FY 2019 cycle is happening as well and it is important to communicate that to our membership to avoid confusion and allow for clear communication with congressional offices.
- Where can I get more information?
  - The ALA Action Center provides talking points and email templates at [ala.org/takeaction](http://ala.org/takeaction)
  - You can also find additional information about the campaign at [ala.org/fundlibraries](http://ala.org/fundlibraries)
  - We'll also be posting updates to the Washington Office Blog at [DistrictDispatch.org](http://DistrictDispatch.org)
  - Otherwise you can contact:
    - Lisa Lindle
    - [llindle@alawash.org](mailto:llindle@alawash.org)
    - 202-628-8410

#### **Additional resources:**

- **Action Center:** Provides talking points and draft emails - [ala.org/takeaction](http://ala.org/takeaction)
- **District Dispatch:** Updates from the Washington Office that specifically deal with library funding can be found at - <http://www.districtdispatch.org/category/funding/>
- **IMLS Data:** Search for awarded grant information - <https://www.imls.gov/grants/awarded-grants>
- **Track the "Dear Appropriator" letter signatures:** [ALA.org/fundlibraries](http://ALA.org/fundlibraries)
- **Story Collection form:** [ALA.org/fundlibraries](http://ALA.org/fundlibraries)