TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: 45-115 Transition Planning Initiative

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:
Information Report

CONTACT PERSONs:

Julie Todaro, ALA President
Emily Sheketoff, Director, ALA Washington Office

DRAFT OF MOTION:
N/A

DATE: October 12, 2016

BACKGROUND:

The 2016 national election represents an extraordinary opportunity and challenge for policymakers and the 59,000 members of the American Library Association. Not only will we elect a new President but with the retirement of key Congressional leaders and a very competitive electoral landscape, we could have a very different Congress in 2017.

Libraries and library professionals contribute to the nation’s agenda in so many ways—as characterized by The E’s of Libraries®: Education, Employment, Entrepreneurship, Empowerment, and Engagement.

The 45-115 Initiative, named after the next President – our 45th - and the next Congress – our 115th - is designed to promote our vision and national agenda to leading federal policymakers and to position US Libraries and Library professionals as valuable assets and team members in the setting of federal policy and the advancement of national goals for both the Administrative and Legislative branches.

Initiated by ALA President Julie Todaro and led by Past president Courtney Young, the 45-115 ALA Federal Initiative will highlight and strengthen library community efforts to communicate how libraries advance national priorities working closely with the Presidential Transition Teams and the policy arms of both parties in the Senate and the House.

This bipartisan outreach effort will build on the ALA Libraries Transform national campaign focus on raising public awareness of library innovation and the value of the “expert in the library”. State and local library leaders also will be engaged to leverage their expertise and contacts to inform policymakers and elected officials of the myriad ways that libraries contribute to the nation and its community.
Working with Washington strategic consultant Jenny Backus, who is known to ALA members through her presentations at National Library Legislative Day and the Midwinter 2016 Policy Briefing, activities at the national, state, and local levels will be pursued as part of the 45-115 Initiative. At the national level, the ALA Washington Office is developing materials and messaging to be used to outreach with the incoming Administration, the Transition teams and Congress. Like the Presidential Transition teams, the ALA DC team is also conducting an in-depth analysis of the federal agencies and is also working to identify the candidates from the library community to recommend for the presidential transition teams and positions in the new Administration.

Also in Washington, both public sessions and private meetings will be held in the late fall and early winter to engage with influential players in the national policy arena before the election, during the transition, and during the initial days and months of the new Administration and Congress.

On the state and local levels, materials are being developed and will be disseminated to help librarians communicate and connect with newly-elected officials. This includes library-requested meetings and submitting our materials to relevant staffers, as well as working to have library interests or library professionals and friends included in events and meetings organized by the elected leaders and others.

Suggestions and input from ALA members anywhere across the country are welcomed for the 45-115 Presidential Initiative as we develop materials to share with policymakers in your community. For ideas, materials, messages as well as issues you feel need to be addressed, please – using the subject heading “45-115” - email Emily Sheketoff, esheketoff@alawash.org and copy Courtney Young, Initiative Leader, cly11@psu.edu.