

ALA American Library Association

April 13, 2015

The Honorable Bob Casey
United States Senate
393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States Senate
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren
United States Senate
317 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Casey, Baldwin, and Warren:

On behalf of the American Library Association (ALA), I am writing in support of your amendment to the Every Child Achieves Act that is based on S. 882, the Better Educator Support and Training Act or the "BEST Act".

In particular, ALA is pleased that your amendment would add a definition of "educator" to Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that includes staff that directly provide or support instruction, such as a school librarian.

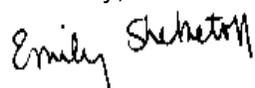
Recent data¹ available from the Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) highlights the lack of support for effective school library programs across the country. NCES data reveals that approximately 8,830 public schools across the nation do not have a school library and for those schools that do have a library, nearly 17,000 schools do not have a full or part-time state-certified school librarian on staff.

ALA is disheartened by this lack of support for effective school library programs because schools with an effective school library program – which includes a state certified school librarian – ensure their students have the best chance to succeed.

Therefore, ALA is pleased to support your amendment because it will help to ensure that school librarians are better able participate in professional development activities and other programming under Title II of ESEA. I look forward to helping you in any way libraries can in your pursuit of improving our students learning environments.

In addition, we are pleased that the Committee is working to update critical legislation and are optimistic that improvements to ESEA will help ensure that all students graduating from America's schools will be adequately prepared for college and/or success in the workforce.

Sincerely,



Emily Sheketoff, Executive Director

¹ For additional information on NCES 2011-2012 data, see http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables_list.asp#2012.

Washington Office, American Library Association