

ALA American Library Association

July 23, 2014

Mike Kruger
Director of Digital Engagement
Office of Public Affairs
Department of Commerce

Dear Mr. Kruger:

The American Library Association has long promoted access to government information for all. Our members see the value of an open government and transparency of its information; including its data. We have always believed that information gathered and created by our government should be available to the people in formats they can best use it.

I was excited to see the creation of the Office of Digital Engagement at the Department of Commerce and look forward to the formation of the Data Advisory Council. We are very pleased the Secretary Pritzker recognizes the great value that this information can be to the public and America's businesses. When I read in the press release that this new advisory council will help Commerce maximize the value of its data, I wanted to offer the crucial skills that librarians possess.

The roll of a librarian is to organize and deliver information in a usable, timely and accessible way; while aiding the public in utilizing that information as needed. Not only have librarians long handled government data, but they are always seeking new and better ways to fulfill the public's need of that information. The knowledge that librarians have of both accessing and utilizing data, would be of great benefit to the Department of Commerce. Please let me know how I can assist you in identifying these information professionals to ensure that the Data Advisory Council has the people needed to make their efforts successful.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to an open government. I look forward to discussing this further with you.

Sincerely,



Emily Sheketoff
Executive Director of the Washington Office
American Library Association