



(/news/)

Business, government, education leaders call for emergency funding for libraries impacted by COVID-19

For Immediate Release

Mon, 05/11/2020

Contact:

Shawnda Hines

Assistant Director, Communications

Public Policy and Advocacy

shines@alawash.org (mailto:shines@alawash.org)

WASHINGTON — A coalition of business, government, and education leaders are calling on Congress to provide emergency aid to libraries impacted by COVID-19 in a letter released today (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/COVID-19%20Relief%20for%20Libraries.pdf>) by the American Library Association (ALA).

Libraries have suffered thousands of furloughs or layoffs due to COVID-19, according to the letter. Without federal assistance, more job losses are possible in the months ahead. The fiscal effects may impact future budgets, even as some areas begin to re-open and demand grows for library services.

“Libraries have been crucial city partners during the crisis, working to keep residents informed and connected,” said Joe Buscaino, Los Angeles Council President Pro Tempore and President, National League of Cities. “As we look to the recovery ahead, it is imperative to maintain library services for job seekers and small businesses.”

“Libraries mean jobs to companies like mine,” said Steve Potash, CEO of OverDrive. “With billions of dollars in purchases each year, libraries support businesses across the country.”

“These leaders from diverse sectors know that libraries are essential to America’s recovery,” said ALA President Wanda Brown. “As communities plan for reopening, it would be counterproductive not to have libraries fully staffed and ready to help their communities recover.”

More than 30 businesses and nonprofit organizations signed the letter, including: Afterschool Alliance; American Federation of Teachers; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; American Library Association; Association for Rural & Small Libraries; Association of Research Libraries; Baker & Taylor; Brodart; Chief Officers of State Library Agencies; Council of State Archivists; Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO; EDGE Consulting Partners; Findaway; Hachette Book Group; International Dyslexia Association; National Association of Elementary School Principals; National Association of Secondary School Principals; National Center for Families Learning; National Coalition for History; National Coalition for Literacy; National Federation of the Blind; National Humanities Alliance; National League of Cities; National School Boards Association; National Writing Project; NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association; OverDrive, Inc.; Reach Out and Read; Reading Is Fundamental; Reading Recovery Council of North America; SAGE Publishing; Service Employees International Union; U.S. Conference of Mayors; Urban

Libraries Council; and VALUEUSA.

The letter follows bipartisan congressional proposals to include funding for libraries in upcoming coronavirus relief legislation. More than 100 House members signed a letter by Representatives Andy Levin (D-MI), Don Young (R-AK), and Raúl M. Grijalva (D-AZ), and more than 40 Senators signed a letter by Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Susan Collins (R-ME).

“The \$50 million that Congress provided in the earlier CARES Act is supporting libraries’ role in digital inclusion,” added Brown. “However, the financial damage from COVID-19 has far outstripped those funds and will continue in the coming months. Libraries are ready to support their communities in the recovery, but we need congressional action to provide relief to libraries.”



(/news/feed/press-releases/rss.xml)
Subscribe (/news/feed/press-releases/rss.xml)

Tags

Advocacy (/news/taxonomy/term/448), Public Policy and Advocacy (PPA) (/news/taxonomy/term/628), American Library Association (/news/taxonomy/term/532)