

Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2009 (H.R. 3221)

ALA is constantly working to find ways to get libraries' needs recognized in important legislation and identifying potential new sources of funding.

Working closely with community college library leaders from ACRL, ALA has been lobbying for language highlighting the important role community college libraries play in preparing students to successfully obtain and retain employment as part of the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2009 (H.R. 3221).

Introduced by U.S. Rep. George Miller (D-CA), H.R. 3221 would establish two new competitive grant programs that would give states and junior and community colleges the opportunity to apply for funds to launch initiatives to improve graduation and employment-related outcomes. However, the existing bill language does not explicitly include community college libraries as potential recipients of the grants.

Since the bill's introduction, the ALA Washington Office has lobbied House Education and Labor Committee members to insert language highlighting the important role community college libraries play in preparing students to successfully obtain and retain employment.

The Washington Office has also been in communication and consultation with the American Association of Community Colleges, which does not oppose community college library language being inserted.

Similar efforts have started in the Senate, however a community college bill has not been introduced. Lynne Bradley, director for the ALA Office of Government Relations, says explicit bill language is key to increasing the likelihood of community college libraries receiving grants under these new programs.

Jenni Terry is press officer at ALA's Washington Office, e-mail: jterry@alawash.org

"Securing bill language that inserts libraries would help elevate the visibility of college libraries on their local campuses, bringing attention to the valuable role community college libraries play. Our hope is that community colleges pursuing the grants that would be made available by this bill would invest in their libraries and the services they offer," Bradley said.

Bradley also said that upon the House's return to work on H.R. 3221, the library community must be extremely active to demonstrate the broad grassroots support for recognizing the important role of community colleges on our campuses.

Since the bill did not make it to the House floor for a vote before the August recess, Bradley says there is more time to get community college library language inserted into the text of the bill. In addition, the Senate is drafting a comparable version of the bill, and the Washington Office is contacting key Senate offices to advocate community college library language be included in the legislation. *~*

("What's the opposite . . ." continued from page 521)

6. T. M. Owen and Courtney Michael, "A Crash Course on Open Access," *Faculty Voice*, March 22, 2009: 3-7, hdl.handle.net/1903/9028.

7. Peter Suber, "Lessons from Maryland," *SPARC Open Access Newsletter*, 134, June 2, 2009, www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/06-02-09.htm#maryland.

8. Peter Suber, "Maryland Faculty Votes Against OA Policy," *Open Access News*, 24 April 2009. <http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/2009/04/faculty-votes-against-oa-policy-at.html>.

9. Stevan Harnad, "Gold Fever: Read and Weep," Online Posting, April 27, 2009. License: Licensing Digital Information, www.library.yale.edu/~license/ListArchives/0904/msg00090.html. *~*