

ALA Washington Office programs at ALA Midwinter; Anti-net neutrality bill defeated

ALA's Washington Office (WO) will host several programs January 21 at the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Dallas, Texas, related to current legislative and policy work.

The first program of the day will be ALA WO's update, which will consist of two consecutive panel discussions on orphaned works and digital libraries. The first panel will examine the current state of orphaned works. Panelists will discuss how institutions are "unlocking" orphans, best practices developed in doing so, and possible paths forward. The second panel will review the landscape of digital libraries, including the HaithiTrust Digital Library, Internet Archive, and the proposed Digital Public Library of America. Panelists will discuss how the models work, ways in which they differ, and how each digital library is approaching orphaned works.

Following the ALA WO update, will be the break-out session, How to Save Your Library Using Grassroots Strategies: Success Stories. Listen to Advocacy Guru Stephanie Vance share valuable tips on how to influence policymakers during tough economic times. Also, hear success stories from library advocates around the country and what they have done to influence policymakers at their institutions and in their community. Attendees will walk away with ten principles for grassroots success.

Another break-out session will be held on Ensuring Access to and Use of Digital Collections. Building on the ALA WO Office for Information Technology Policy Perspectives Paper, "Digitizing Hidden Collections in Public Libraries," the panel will address

initiatives aimed at providing increased access to the invaluable small- and medium-sized digitization projects created by libraries, archives, and museums. Panelists will discuss how to ensure access to and discoverability of digitization projects after their creation and best practices for collaborating with other institutions.

In the afternoon, the ALA WO will host a discussion of the Government Printing Office's (GPO) Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). Representatives from GPO, Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL), and the Minnesota-Michigan proposal have been invited to speak and time will be allotted for questions and discussion among meeting participants.

For additional information about proposed FDLP proposals and recent related communications, please visit <http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/advleg/federallegislation/govinfo/fdlp/index.cfm>.

Anti-net neutrality bill defeated in the U.S. Senate

A final note on recent legislative activity on Capitol Hill: on November 10, 2011, the U.S. Senate took up the long-awaited issue of internet (net) neutrality. Senate Joint Resolution (S.J. Res.) 6, the anti-net neutrality bill that Senator Hutchinson (R-TX) introduced back in February was finally brought to the floor for a much anticipated vote. The bill was defeated by a partisan vote of 46 yeas to 52 nays. The outcome sent a clear message that libraries and those they serve (the public) not only care strongly about this issue but also depend upon a free and open internet to provide unfettered access to all types of information.

The bill's demise ensured that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) order will go into effect on November 20, 2011. *rw*

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